THE

OLD MANOR HOUSE.

A

NOVEL,

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH.

VOL. II.

Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear from tale or hiſtory,
The courſe of true love ever did run ſmooth;
But either it was different in blood,
Or elſe miſgrafted in reſpect of years,
Or elſe it ſtood upon the choice of friends;
Or, if there were a ſympathy in choice,
War, death, or ſickneſs, did lay ſiege to it.

SHAKESP. Midſummer Night's Dream.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

OLD MANOR HOUSE.

CHAP. I.

ON the following morning Orlando received an early ſummons from his father, requeſting him to be at home by two o'clock, when his mother, his ſiſter, and General Tracy were expected; for, as the General travelled with his own four horſes, which were very fine ones, and of which he was particularly fond, the ladies had agreed to remain one night on the road, and reach home early the ſecond day; though the journey was otherwiſe eaſily performed in one, Weſt Wolverton being only about ſixty five miles from London.

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Orlando having informed Mrs. Rayland of the reaſon of his abſence; having ſeen Monimia for a moment, again whiſpered to her to be leſs apprehenſive for his ſafety, and promiſing to ſee her at night, he proceeded to obey his father. On his arrival, he found him walking with the General on the graſs plot before the door; and, ſpringing from his horſe, paid his duty to him, was introduced in form to the General, and then eagerly aſked for his mother and his ſiſter.

They were within; and Orlando, flying to them, was ſurpriſed by his mother's throwing her arms around him, and falling into an agony of tears, in which his three ſiſters, who ſtood around her, accompanied her. He entreated an explanation; and learned from Iſabella, who alone was able to ſpeak, that the ſervants had been telling them, inſtantly on their arrival at home, that he was about to fight a duel, in which it was the opinion of the informers that he muſt certainly be killed.

Orlando,

Orlando, execrating the folly of the ſervants, or rather the paltry conduct of Sir John Belgrave, who had apparently made all this buſtle on purpoſe, endeavoured to re-aſſure and conſole his mother; but her alarm for his ſafety was too great to allow her to liſten patiently to any thing he could ſay, ſince the fact of his having received and accepted a challenge from Sir John Belgrave he did not attempt to deny. The anxious mother, now that ſhe ſaw him before her, thought only of preventing the meeting which might deprive her of that comfort for ever. She ſeemed afraid of his ſtirring from her ſight, as if Sir John Belgrave had lurked in every corner of the houſe; and deſired he would remain with her in her own room, while ſhe ſent Iſabella to entreat that Mr. Somerive would come to her.

When he ſaw her, her tears and agitation ſufficiently explained to him, that thoſe whom he had expreſsly ordered to be ſilent had found it impoſſible to obey him. To

Selina and Emma, the two youngeſt girls, who had remained at home, it had been known almoſt as ſoon as to himſelf, but he had enjoined them to conceal it from their mother; and knew that, whatever it coſt them to be ſilent on ſuch a ſubject, neither of them would diſobey him. It was, however, too late, or at leaſt uſeleſs, to declaim againſt the folly of thoſe who *had*; and he found ſufficient employment in appeaſing the diſtreſs of his wife and daughters, while he ſent Orlando to entertain the General.

General Tracy was the ſecond brother of a noble family; and, having entered very young into the army, had paſſed through the inferior ranks with that rapidity which intereſt always ſecures. At five-and-thirty he had a regiment; and as ſome of the fortunes of uncles and aunts had centred in him, he was now, at near ſixty, a man of very large fortune, and ſeemed to want nothing to complete his happineſs, but the power of perſuading others, as he had almoſt

moſt perſuaded himſelf, that he was but five-and-thirty ſtill.

To effect this, and maintain that favour which he had always been in among the ladies, was the great object of his life. His perſon had been celebrated for beauty; and he deſired to preſerve a pre-eminence, which was in his opinion ſuperior to any fame he could derive from his bravery in the field, or his ability in the ſenate, where he had long been a member, certainly voting with the miniſter of the day. He had a place about the court, at which he was a conſtant attendant, and where the ſoftneſs and elegance of his manners, the pliability of his political attachments, and his very conſiderable intereſt and property, rendered him a great favourite.—All the time he could ſpare from his duty there, he ſeemed to devote to the ſervice of thoſe faſhionable women who give the ton, and whoſe favour he diſputed with the riſing heroes of the faſhionable world. But he felt in reality only diſguſt and ſatiety in their company;

and had no taſte but for youth and beauty, of which he was continually in ſearch—and with his fortune his ſearch could not be unſucceſsful. He had no ſcruples to deter him from decoying any young woman whom he liked, that chance might throw into his power; but he uſually avoided with care any ſcheme which was likely to be interrupted by the unpleaſant remonſtrances of a father or a brother, and generally purſued only the indigent and the defenceleſs.

As he purchaſed his wine of Mr. Woodford, he had occaſionally been at his houſe. His daughters were rather handſome, and very lively girls; and though they did not come exactly under the deſcription of thoſe whoſe preference the General could without much trouble ſecure, he found himſelf pleaſed with their company, becauſe they were greatly flattered by the admiration of ſuch a faſhionable man, and never ſo happy as when the General ſent his ſuperb coach for them, and gallanted them to ſome public place, or drove them in his phaeton

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through Hyde Park to Kenſington Gardens. Their father, who thought more of the good cuſtomer which the General was himſelf, and the great families he had recommended him to, than of any neceſſity for reſerve in his daughters, encouraged this acquaintance (which their mother was as well pleaſed with as the young women) till the neighbourhood talked loudly of their indiſcretion, and till the youngeſt Miſs Woodford, who was his peculiar favourite, was declared by many ladies to have conſiderably injured her reputation. This ſhe herſelf conſidered only as a teſtimony of their envy, and her own ſuperior attractions; and the more ſhe heard of their malignant remarks, the more eagerly ſhe endeavoured to ſhew her contempt of their opinion, and her power over the General, who, on the return of the family to town after their viſit to Weſt Wolverton, was more than uſual at the houſe. But thither he was no longer attracted by the charms of Miſs Eliza Woodford. The moment he beheld

Iſabella Somerive, he had no eyes for any other perſon; and though he ſoon learned that ſhe was in a ſituation of life which placed her above thoſe temptations which he generally found infallible, and had a father and two brothers to protect her, the impreſſion ſhe had made was ſuch that he could not determine to loſe ſight of her; and as the diſcovery of the preference he gave her had made both her couſins very little deſirous of her company in London during the winter, where ſhe ſeemed too likely to rob them of all their conqueſts, he found ſhe was to return home with her mother—and thither he reſolved to follow her.

An opportunity of introducing himſelf into the family of Somerive was eaſily obtained, when he recollected that, in the preceding war, Somerive, in whoſe own county there was at that time no militia, had, being then an active man, procured a commiſſion in that of a neighbouring county, and ſerved in a camp then formed for

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the defence of the coaſt, where he himſelf was a captain. They had at that time been frequently together, and afterwards kept up ſome degree of intimacy, till Somerive's marriage fixing him wholly in retirement, the gay and faſhionable ſoldier thought of him no more.

The General, however, no ſooner knew who the viſitors at Woodford's were, than he moſt aſſiduouſly and ſucceſsfully paid his court to Mrs. Somerive; talked to her continually of her huſband, whoſe merits he affected to remember with infinite regard, and for whoſe intereſt he appeared to feel the warmeſt concern. It was a theme of which Mrs. Somerive, who adored her huſband, was never weary; and while General Tracy ſo pathetically lamented the interruption of their friendſhip, nothing was more natural than her entreaties to him that he would renew it.

That was the point he had laboured to gain, and he accepted the invitation ſhe gave him, adding the opportunity of the

ſhooting ſeaſon to his other inducements, the better to colour ſo unexpected a viſit. He had found it convenient to pretend a great paſſion for field ſports—partly becauſe it was faſhionable, and partly becauſe it ſhewed that his powers of enduring fatigue were equal to the youthful appearance he aſſumed; and to ſupport this, he now and then went through, what was to him moſt miſerable drudgery, that of a day's hunting or ſhooting; but he more uſually contrived, when he was at the houſes of his friends for theſe purpoſes, to ſprain his ancle in the firſt excurſion he made, or to hurt himſelf by the recoil of his gun: and by ſuch methods he generally managed to be left without ſuſpicion at home with the ladies; with whom he was ſo univerſal a favourite, and to whom he had ſo many ways of recommending himſelf, by deciding on their dreſs, reading to them books of entertainment, and relating anecdotes collected in the higher circles where he moved in the winter, that he found no loſs of attention

from the progreſs of years—a progreſs indeed which he took the utmoſt pains to conceal. His clothes, which were always made by the moſt eminent taylor, were cut with as much care as thoſe of the moſt celebrated beauty on her firſt appearance at court; and he had ſeveral contrivances, of his own invention, to make them fit with advantage to his perſon. His hands were more delicate than thoſe of any lady; and though he could not ſo totally baffle the inexorable hands of time as to eſcape a few wrinkles, he ſtill maintained a conſiderable ſhare of the bloom of youth, not without ſuſpicion of Olympian dew, cold cream, and Spaniſh wool. Certain it is that he was very long at his toilet every day, to which no perſon, not even his valet-de-chambre, was admitted. With all this he was a man of the moſt undoubted bravery; and had not only ſerved in Germany with great credit, but had been engaged in ſeveral affairs of honour, in which he had always acquitted himſelf with courage and

propriety. Such was the man who was now, from no very honourable motives, become an inmate in the houſe of Mr. Somerive.

When Mr. Somerive had appeaſed the diſtreſs into which his wife was thrown by the intelligence ſhe had ſo abruptly received about Orlando, and had prevailed upon her to compoſe herſelf and appear at dinner, he returned back to his friend, whom he found in converſation with Orlando; and he determined that he would, over their wine, relate to him what had paſſed between Sir John Belgrave and his ſon (who had put Sir John's laſt letter into his hands), and take the General's opinion as to what was fit to be done.

Dinner was announced, and the ladies of the family appeared;—the mother, with ſwollen eyes, which ſhe could not a moment keep from Orlando; and the daughters appearing to ſympathize with her, particularly Selina, who was fondly attached to Orlando, and who, from the terror in which ſhe

ſhe ſaw her mother, having caught redoubled apprehenſion, could hardly command her tears; and though the General failed not to compliment her on her beauty, which even exceeded that of her ſiſter, and to ſpeak in the warmeſt terms to Mr. and Mrs. Somerive of their lovely family, Selina heeded him not. He obſerved that Iſabella was leſs inſenſible of his ſtudied eulogiums, and from thence drew a favourable omen. Emma, the youngeſt of the girls, was only between twelve and thirteen.

As ſoon as the table-cloth was removed, Mrs. Somerive, under pretence of being a good deal fatigued with her journey, and ſomewhat indiſpoſed, withdrew with her daughters: Mr. Somerive ſoon after gave Orlando a hint to go alſo; and then he opened to General Tracy the affair which lay ſo heavy on his heart, and entreated his advice how to act.

"I am glad," anſwered the General, "to learn the cauſe of Mrs. Somerive's concern,

concern, which was ſo evident at dinner, as well as that of her amiable daughters, that I was afraid ſome very diſagreeable incident had happened in the family."

"And is not," ſaid Mr. Somerive, "what I have related diſagreeable enough?"

"No, upon my honour! I ſee nothing in it but what is rather a matter of exultation. Your ſon is one of the fineſt and moſt ſpirited young men I ever ſaw. If he was a ſon of my own, I ſhould rejoice that he had acted ſo properly, and be very proud of him."

"But you would not riſk his life, ſurely?" ſaid Mr. Somerive.

"Why, as to that," replied the General, "in theſe caſes there is ſome little riſk, to be ſure; but I ſhould never check a lad of ſpirit. I know Belgrave," added he, ſmiling.

"And what is his reputation for courage?" enquired Mr. Somerive.

"Oh! he is quite the fine man of the day,"

day," anſwered the General careleſsly.—"He will fight, if he muſt—but I believe is quite as willing to let it alone."

"It will break my wife's heart," ſaid Mr. Somerive dejectedly, and amazed at the different light in which two people, from their different modes of life, conſider the ſame object; "it will certainly break my wife's heart, if any evil befalls Orlando."

General Tracy now ſaw that an opportunity offered by which he might confer an obligation on the family, which muſt ſecure their endleſs gratitude, and he reſolved to embrace it.

"If it makes you all ſo uneaſy," replied he, after a moment's pauſe, "and eſpecially if her fears make Mrs. Somerive ſo very wretched, ſuppoſe we try what can be done to put an end to the affair without a meeting. I dare ſay Belgrave will eaſily be induced, on the ſlighteſt apology, to drop the affair entirely."

"But even the ſlighteſt apology Orlando will

will not be perſuaded to make," ſaid Mr. Somerive.

"He is right," anſwered the General; "and I honour him for his reſolution. It is a thouſand pities," continued he, again pauſing, "that ſuch a gloriouſly ſpirited young fellow ſhould waſte his life in ſeclu-ſion, waiting on the caprices of an old wo-man——What do you intend to do with him?"

"That," ſaid Somerive, "is what I have long been in doubt about. I had thoughts once of putting him into trade; but to that project Mrs. Rayland's objections, and Or-lando's little inclination to follow it, put an end."

"I am glad they did; for it would have been a ſad ſacrifice, I think, to have ſet ſo fine a young man down to a compting-houſe deſk for the reſt of his life."

"And at other times," re-aſſumed Mr. Somerive, "I have thought of the church, Mrs. Rayland has very conſiderable patron-age; but though I have hinted very fre-

quently to her my wiſhes on this ſubject, ſhe never would underſtand me, to give me any aſſurance that ſhe would ſecure him a living; or made any offer of aſſiſtance to ſupport him at the univerſity, which ſhe knows that it is quite impoſſible for me, circumſtanced as I am at preſent, to do."

"She was in the right of it," cried the General. "The old lady has more ſagacity than I ſuſpected, and knows that it would be abſolutely a ſin to make him a parſon, and bury all that ſenſe and ſpirit in a country vicarage. Why, my good friend, do you not put your ſon into the army?—that ſeems to be the profeſſion for which nature has deſigned him."

"Becauſe," anſwered Somerive, "I have, in the firſt place, no money to buy him a commiſſion; and, if I had, there are two great objections to it:—it would half kill his mother, and take him out of the way of Mrs. Rayland, which appears to be very impolitic."

"What if a commiſſion were found for him,"

him," ſaid General Tracy, "do you think the other objections ought to weigh much? Conſider of it, my good friend; and if you think ſuch a plan would be eligible, and the young man himſelf likes it, perhaps it may be in my power to be of ſome uſe to you."

Mr. Somerive warmly expreſſed his gratitude for the intereſt that his friend ſeemed to take in the welfare of his Orlando; and then, after a ſhort ſilence, ſaid: "But, my dear General, we forget, while we are planning ſchemes for the future life of Orlando, it may be terminated to-morrow."

"Well," replied he, "ſince I ſee you cannot conquer your alarm about this matter, and as I am ſtill more concerned for Mrs. Somerive, I will go over early in the morning to Belgrave, who has wiſely appointed the meeting at twelve o'clock, and ſomehow or other we will get it ſettled.—If I ſay to the doughty baronet, that his honour will ſuffer nothing by dropping it, I am pretty well aſſured that he will be content

content to let it go no farther. Make yourſelf eaſy therefore, and go tell your wife that I will take care of her little boy, while I pay my reſpects to the young ladies whom I ſee walking in the garden."

Somerive, whoſe heart was agonized by the diſtreſs of his wife, haſtened to relieve her; and the General went off at a quick march to overtake the three Miſs Somerives, to whom he related ſome part of the converſation that had paſſed between him and their father, and the taſk he had undertaken of ſettling the affair with Sir John Belgrave.

The ſenſible hearts of theſe charming girls were filled with the livelieſt emotions towards the General, who, if he could ſave their brother from danger, which their timidity had dreadfully magnified, they believed would be entitled to their everlaſting gratitude. The brilliant eyes of Iſabella ſparkled with pleaſure, while the ſofter blue eyes of Selina were turned towards him filled with tears of pleaſure; and little-

Emma

Emma longed to embrace him, as ſhe uſed to do her father when he had granted any of her infantine requeſts. While every one alternately expreſſed her thanks, Tracy whiſpered to Iſabella, by whoſe ſide he was walking: "To give the ſlighteſt pleaſure to my lovely Iſabella, I would do infinitely more; and, rather than ſhe ſhould be alarmed, take myſelf the chance of Sir John Belgrave's fire."

Iſabella, too ignorant of the ways of the world to be either offended or alarmed by ſuch a ſpeech, and naturally pleaſed by flattery and admiration, ſmiled on the enamoured General in a manner ſo faſcinating as overpaid him for all the trouble he had taken or propoſed to take: and while he meditated againſt his old friend the greateſt injury he could commit, he reconciled himſelf to it, by determining to do ſuch ſervices to the other part of the family, as would more than compenſate for the inroads he might make on its peace by carrying off Iſabella; for to carry her off he was reſolved,

ed, if his art could effect it. His eagerneſs, however, to ſerve Orlando, had another motive than this of retribution. He foreſaw that ſo ſpirited a young man might prevent, or, not being able to do that, would very ſeriouſly reſent his deſigns upon a ſiſter: the character of the elder brother, of which he had by this time formed a pretty clear idea, left him little to apprehend from him; but the fiery and impetuous Orlando would, he thought, be much better out of the way.

His converſation with the Miſs Somerives now took a gayer turn; and ſo happy did he feel himſelf with three ſuch nymphs around him, that he regretted the ſummons which called them in to attend the tea-table.

Mrs. Somerive, who had now been long in conference with her huſband, and afterwards with Orlando, appeared much more cheerful than at dinner, and ſurveyed the General with thoſe looks of complacency which expreſſed how much ſhe was obliged

to

to him for the interference he had promiſed. The evening paſſed off pleaſantly. Orlando ſtaid to ſupper; but then told his father, that he had ſome buſineſs to do for Mrs. Rayland early the next day (which was true), and therefore he would return to the Hall that evening. Mr. Somerive, who ſtill felt a dread which he could not conquer, entreated him to give his word of honour, that he would not throw himſelf in the way of Sir John Belgrave till the hour of that gentleman's appointment. This Orlando (who was ignorant of the plans in agitation to prevent that appointment from taking place at all) thought himſelf obliged to comply with: on which condition his father, though reluctantly, ſuffered him at midnight to mount his horſe and return to Rayland Hall, where he had deſired Betty to ſit up for him; fearful of entering through the chapel, leſt his doing ſo ſhould lead to thoſe ſuſpicions he was ſo deſirous of avoiding. As ſoon as he left his father's door,

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he put his horſe into a gallop, impatient to be with Monimia; and as he croſſed the park, he ſaw a light in her turret, and pleaſed himſelf with the idea of her fondly expecting his arrival.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

ORLANDO, on his entering the ſervants' hall, found Betty waiting for him as ſhe had promiſed. "Lord, Sir," cried ſhe as ſoon as he appeared, "I thoſt as you'd never come! Why it's almoſt half paſt one o'clock, and I be frighted out of my ſeven ſenſes ſitting up ſo all alone." "I beg your pardon, dear Betty!" replied he; "but I could not get away ſooner. I'll never detain you ſo long again; and now ſuffer me to make you what amends I can, by deſiring your acceptance of this." He preſented her with a crown, which ſhe looked at a moment, and then, archly leering at him, ſaid, "Humph! if you give folks a crown for ſitting up for you in the kitchen, I ſuppoſe they as bides with you in your ſtudy have double price."

"Come,

"Come, come, Betty," ſaid Orlando, impatient to eſcape from her troubleſome enquiries, "let me hear no more of ſuch nonſenſe. I have nobody ever in my ſtudy, as you know very well. It is very late—I wiſh you a good night."

He then, without attending to her farther, as ſhe ſeemed ſtill diſpoſed to talk, took his candle and went to his own apartment; where after waiting about a quarter of an hour, till he thought her retired and the whole houſe quiet, he took his way to the turret.

Monimia had long expected him, and now received him with joy chaſtiſed by the fear which ſhe felt on enquiring into the events of the day. Orlando related to her all that he thought would give her pleaſure, and endeavoured that ſhe ſhould underſtand the affair of the next day ſettled, for he would not violate truth by poſitively aſſerting it: and Monimia, apprehenſive of teaſing him by her enquiries, ſtifled as much as ſhe could the pain ſhe endured

from this uncertainty. This ſhe found it better to do, as ſhe obſerved Orlando to be reſtleſs and diſſatisfied: he complained of the miſery he underwent in his frequent abſences, and of the unworthy excuſes he was compelled to make. He expreſſed impatiently the long unhappineſs he had in proſpect, if he could never ſee her but thus clandeſtinely, and riſking every moment her fame and her peace. Monimia, however, ſoothed him, by bidding him remember how lately it was that they both thought themſelves too happy to meet upon any terms; and would very fain have inſpired him with hopes that they might ſoon look forward to fairer proſpects, hopes which he had often tried to give her. But, alas! ſhe could not communicate what ſhe did not feel; and whichever way they caſt their eyes, all was deſpair as to their ever being united with the conſent of thoſe friends on whom they were totally dependent.

Orlando, moſt ſolicitous for the peace of Monimia,

Monimia, had never been betrayed before into theſe murmurings in her preſence; but ſeemed to forget the threatening aſpect of the future, while he enjoyed the happineſs that was preſent. But all that had paſſed during the day, had aſſiſted in making him diſcontented. His mother's tears and diſtreſs, the tender fears of his ſiſters, and the leſs evident but more heavy anxiety which he ſaw oppreſſed his father, all contributed to convince him that, in being of ſo much conſequence to his family, he loſt the privilege of pleaſing himſelf; that his duty and his inclination muſt be for ever at variance; and that, if he could reſign the hopes of being ſettled in affluence by Mrs. Rayland, he ſtill could not marry Monimia without making his family unhappy—unleſs indeed he had the means of providing for her, of which at preſent there appeared not the leaſt probability. Mrs. Rayland ſeemed likely to live for many years; or, if ſhe died, it was very uncertain whether ſhe would give him more than a trifling legacy.

When he reflected on his ſituation, he became aſhamed of thus ſpending his life, of waſting the beſt of his days in the hope of that which might never happen; while Monimia, almoſt a priſoner in her little apartment, paſſed the day in ſervitude, and divided the night between uneaſy expectation, hazardous conference, and fruitleſs tears.

It was theſe thoughts that gave to Orlando that air of impatience and anxiety, which even in the preſence of Monimia he could not ſo far conquer but that ſhe obſerved it, even before he broke through the reſtraint he had hitherto impoſed on himſelf, and indulged thoſe fears which he had ſo often entreated her to check.

At length, however, the hope ſhe affected to feel, the charm of finding himſelf ſo fondly beloved, and that his Monimia was prepared to meet any deſtiny with him, reſtored him to that temper which he was in when he propoſed to brave the diſcovery of their attachment. With difficulty ſhe perſuaded

perſuaded him to leave her about three o'clock. He glided ſoftly down ſtairs; and when he came out of the lower room of the turret, he found the night ſo very dark that he could not ſee his hand. He knew the way, however, ſo well, that he walked ſlowly but fearleſsly on, and had nearly reached the chapel-door when he found his feet ſuddenly entangled; and before he could either diſengage himſelf, or diſcover what it was that thus impeded his way, ſomebody ran againſt him, whom he ſeized, and loudly demanded to know who it was.

"And who are you?" replied a deep ſurly voice: "let me go, or it ſhall be the worſt day's work you ever did in your life."

Orlando, now convinced that he had taken the fellow who had ſo inſolently intruded upon him, and ſo cruelly alarmed Monimia, felt himſelf provoked to puniſh him for his paſt inſolence, and deter him from repeating it: he therefore firmly

graſped his priſoner, who ſeemed a very ſtout fellow, and who ſtruggled violently for his releaſe—ſo violently indeed that Orlando, exerting all his ſtrength, threw him down; but in doing ſo, the rope which he had at firſt trod upon being in the way, he fell alſo: ſtill however he held his antagoniſt faſt, and, kneeling upon him, ſaid reſolutely, "Whoever you are, I will detain you here till day-light, unleſs you inſtantly tell me your name and buſineſs."

"Curſe your ſtrength!" replied the fallen foe; "if I was not a little boozy, I'd be d—d before you ſhould have the better of me."

"Who are you?" again repeated Orlando.

"Why, who the plague ſhould I be," cried the man, "but Jonas Wilkins?—Ah! Maſter Orlando, I knows you too now well enough—Come, Sir, let a body go: I know you'd ſcorn to do a poor man no harm."

"Jonas Wilkins!" exclaimed Orlando, who knew that to be the name of an outlawed

lawed ſmuggler, famous for his reſolution, and the fears in which he was held by the cuſtom-houſe officers—"Jonas Wilkins! And pray," enquired Orlando, releaſing him, "what may have brought you here, Mr. Jonas Wilkins?"

"Why, I'll tell you," replied the fellow, "for I knows you to be a kind-hearted gentleman, and won't hurt me. The truth of the matter then is this—The butler of this here houſe, Maſter Pattenſon, is engaged a little matter in our buſineſs; and when we gets a cargo, he ſtows it in Madam's cellars, which lays along-ſide the houſe, and he have the means to open that door there in the wall, under that there old fig-tree, which nobody knows nothing about. So here we brings our goods till ſuch time as we can carry it ſafely up the country, and we comes on dark nights to take it away."

"And you were here on Monday night, were you not? and came into my room through the chapel?"

"Yes, that I did, ſure enough. Aha!

Maſter Orlando! I think we've cotch'd one another."

"If that be the caſe," replied Orlando, "it would have been well if we had kept one another's ſecrets. Why did you ſpeak of having ſeen one in my room?"

"Egod, Old Pattenſon was down in the cellar himſelf, for we were helping up ſome heavy goods that night; I don't know what a devil ail'd me, but I thought I'd juſt give a look into your room, where, you muſt know, before you comed to live, we uſed now and then to put a few kegs or ſo upon a pinch—and, d—n it! there was you with a pretty girl. Ah, Maſter Orlando! who'd think you was ſuch a ſly one?"

"Well, but," ſaid Orlando, "what occaſion was there, Jonas, for your telling Pattenſon?"

"To teaſe the old ſon of a b——," anſwered Jonas. Why, don't you know that he's after Betty Richards, and as jealous as poiſon?—So I made him believe 'twas ſhe."

"You made him believe!"

"Aye,

"Aye, for it might be ſhe, or another—Curſe me if I ſaw who it was! for you blow'd out the candle, whiſk! in a minute."

Orlando, heartily glad to hear this, purſued his enquiry farther. "Pray," reſumed he, "tell me why ſome perſon a little while after cried out, Now! now!"

"Why, we thought that all was quiet; and as I and a comrade of mine was waiting for the goods, we were going to heave them up, and that was the ſignal—but you were plaguy quick-eared, and began to holla after us; ſo we were forced to let the job alone till to-night, and Pattenſon let us out through the t'other part of the houſe. We've done the buſineſs now, and my comrades they be all off with the goods—I only ſtaid to gather up our tools, becauſe I be going another way."

Orlando, now finding himſelf thus unexpectedly relieved from the difficulty of accounting for the circumſtance of the night of alarm, was far from reſenting the reſiſt-

ance his new acquaintance had made, or heeding the pain he felt from ſome bruiſes which he had received in the ſtruggle; but being rather pleaſed at this rencontre, and wiſhing to know how far the trade of the worſhipful Mr. Pattenſon was likely to impede his future meetings with Monimia, he invited Jonas into his room, and told him he could give him, late as it was, a glaſs of wine.

Jonas accepted his invitation, but deſired he might ſtay to coil up his ropes, which he depoſited in the porch, and then followed Orlando, who had taken his hanger from the chimney where it uſually hung, and put his piſtols, which were both loaded, by him. Theſe precautions were not meant againſt his gueſt, whom he did not ſuſpect of any immediate intention to injure him, but to let him ſee that he was prepared againſt intruſion, from whatever motive it might be made, at any other time.

When the man made his appearance, Orlando, prepared as he was for the ſight of a ruffian,

ruffian, felt ſomething like horror. His dark countenance ſhaded by two immenſe black eyebrows, his ſhaggy hair, and the fierce and wild expreſſion of his eyes, gave a complete idea of one of Shakeſpeare's well-painted aſſaſſins; while, in contemplating his athletic form, Orlando wondered how he had been able a moment to detain him. He wore a dirty round frock ſtained with ochre which looked like blood, and over it one of thoſe thick great coats which the vulgar call raſcal-wrappers. Orlando poured him out a tumbler of wine, and bade him ſit down. The fellow obeyed, drank off his wine; and then, after ſurveying the room, ſaid, turning with a ſly look to Orlando, "What, Maſter, ſhe ben't here then to-night?"

"Pooh, pooh!" cried Orlando, "let's forget that, good Jonas!—your eyes deceived you, there was nobody here: and I aſſure you it was well you diſappeared as you did, or you would have paid for your peeping," ſhewing one of his piſtols.

"Aye, aye," anſwered Jonas, "you've got a pair of bull-dogs, I ſee!——and I," added he, pulling a pocket-piſtol from under his frock, "I've a terrier or two about me; and 'twas ten to one, Mr. Orlando, if I had not a given a prettygood gueſs who it was, that I had not taken you for an officer, and treated you with more ſugar-plums than would have ſat eaſy upon your ſtomach."

"We are good friends now, however," ſaid Orlando; "ſo drink, Jonas, to our better acquaintance."

He then plied him with another full tumbler of wine, and began to queſtion him on his exploits. He found him one of thoſe daring and deſperate men, who, knowing they are to expect no mercy, diſclaim all hope, and reſolutely prey upon the ſociety which has ſhaken them off. He had been drinking before Orlando met him; and now the wine with which Orlando plied him, and the voice of kindneſs with which he ſpoke to him, contributed to open his heart. Jonas diſcloſed to Orlando all their manœuvres;

manœuvres; and it was not without aſtoniſhment that he found both Snelcraft the coachman and Pattenſon ſo deeply engaged among the ſmugglers, and deriving very conſiderable ſums from the ſhelter they afforded them, and the participation of their illicit gains. Orlando found, that during the whole winter, in weather when no other veſſels kept the ſea, theſe adventurous men purſued their voyages, and carried their cargoes through the country, in weather when "one's enemy's dog" would hardly be turned from the door.

Orlando, after ſome conſideration on the means of eſcaping that interruption which this combination among the ſervants in the houſe ſeemed to threaten, told the man, as if in confidence, that under the reſtraint he was in, in Mrs. Rayland's houſe, he ſometimes found it convenient to go out after the family were in bed, to ſee at a neighbouring town ſome friends whom Mrs. Rayland diſliked he ſhould ſee; and therefore, ſaid he, "I wiſh, Jonas, that, as I ſhould

ſhould not wiſh to interrupt you, you would give me ſome ſignal on thoſe nights when you are at work in the cellar."

This the ſmuggler readily promiſed, and they agreed upon the ſign which ſhould ſignify the importation or exportation of the merchandiſe of Mr. Pattenſon from the cellars of his miſtreſs.

Orlando, poſſeſſing this ſecret, flattered himſelf that his very extraordinary acquaintance would keep his word, and that the communication between the ſtudy and the apartment of Monimia might once more be open, without making her liable to thoſe terrors from which ſhe had ſuffered ſo much.

The man, whom Orlando continued to behold with a mixture of horror and pity, was now nearly overcome with the wine he had drank, and began to relate long profing ſtories of his eſcapes and his exploits, in which he related inſtances of dauntleſs courage, tarniſhed however by brutiſh ferocity. At length Orlando reminded him that day

was

was ſoon approaching, and ſaw him out of the chapel-door, repeating his aſſurances that nothing of what he had himſelf that night diſcovered ſhould tranſpire. Orlando then faſtened the chapel and the other doors, and betook himſelf to his repoſe—thinking leſs about the meeting that was to take place, as he believed, on the morrow, than on the recent diſcovery he had made, which nearly quieted his terrors in regard to Monimia's having been ſeen; and he impatiently longed for an opportunity to communicate to her the ſatisfaction which he hoped ſhe would derive from this aſſurance.

The late hour at which he had gone to bed, and the fatigue of mind he had experienced the preceding day, occaſioned it to be later than uſual when Orlando awoke. He ſtarted up; and recollecting that he had ſome writing to finiſh for Mrs. Rayland, and that he was to meet Sir John Belgrave at twelve o'clock, he haſtened to dreſs himſelf, and had hardly done ſo before he received

ceived a ſummons to attend his father, who waited for him as uſual in the ſtable-yard.

He found Mr. Somerive again on horſe-back, and eaſily underſtood that his purpoſe was to keep him from his appointment, to which however he was poſitively determined to go. While his father, in a peculiar ſtrain of dejection and concern, was yet talking to him as he leaned on the horſe, Mrs. Lennard ſaw them from one of the windows; and having acquainted her lady, ſhe, contrary to her uſual reſerved treatment of Mr. Somerive, ſent down a very civil meſſage requeſting his company with Orlando to breakfaſt.

This invitation, ſo flattering becauſe ſo unuſual, was of courſe accepted. Somerive knew that Mrs. Rayland was acquainted with the affair which hung over him with an aſpect ſo threatening, and hoped that ſhe would unite with him in perſuading Orlando to thoſe conceſſions which might yet afford the means of evading it, if the General's interpoſition ſhould fail: inſtead of which,

which, he found her elated with the idea of puniſhing the audacity of Sir John, fearleſs of any danger which in the attempt might happen to Orlando, and piqueing herſelf on the ſuppoſition that in him had revived a ſpark of that martial and dauntleſs ſpirit which ſhe had been taught to believe characteriſed the men of her family. She ſeemed ſurpriſed, and ſomewhat offended, at the alarm Mr. Somerive expreſſed; and hinted, in no very equivocal terms, that this timidity was the effect of that mixture of plebeian blood, from the alloy of which only Orlando, of all the family, ſeemed exempt: while Mr. Somerive, in his turn, beheld, with a degree of horror and diſguſt, a woman who, to gratify her pride, or revenge her quarrel, on ſo trifling a ſubject, was ready to promote perhaps the death of one for whom ſhe had appeared to feel ſome degree of affection.

With views and opinions ſo different, their conference was not likely to be either very long or very ſatisfactory. Mr. Somerive

rive knew, that when Mrs. Rayland had once taken up an opinion, argument againſt it offended, but never convinced her; and that in proportion as her reaſoning was feeble, her reſolution was firm. Thus baffled in his hopes of her effectual interpoſition, and ſeeing that Orlando was bent upon keeping his appointment, of which the hour was now at hand, Mr. Somerive ſat awhile ſilent, mortified and wretched—hoping, yet fearing, for the ſucceſs of the General's interpoſition, and conſidering what he ſhould do if it failed.

He had juſt determined to obtain a warrant immediately, and to put both parties under arreſt, when a ſervant brought to him the following letter:

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I AM now with Sir John Belgrave; and as I know the very natural and tender ſolicitude which you and your amiable family are under, I loſe not a moment in doing myſelf the pleaſure to aſſure you, that

that Sir John conſents to give the matter up, and that without any conceſſions from your ſon that may be derogatory to his honour. If Sir John allows me to ſay that he is ſorry for what has paſſed, it can ſurely not be too much for Mr. Orlando to make to him the ſame conceſſion. I have great ſatisfaction in communicating to you the ſucceſs of my ſincere endeavours to be ſerviceable, and have the honour to be,

"My dear Sir,

"Your moſt devoted ſervant,

"CHARLES-FERDINAND TRACY."

Mr. Somerive read this billet with a beating heart, apprehenſive that the interpoſition of Mrs. Rayland would prevent Orlando from making even the ſlight apology which General Tracy dictated; and ſeeing him reſtleſs, and meditating how to eſcape, he haſtily bade Mrs. Rayland good morning; and ordering, in a more peremptory voice than he generally aſſumed, Orlando to follow him, he left the room; and, as ſoon

ſoon as he was alone with his ſon, put into his hands the letter he had received, at the ſame time telling him that he muſt be obeyed in the command he laid upon him, to make immediately the conceſſion required.

Orlando, convinced that he ought to do ſo, after the appeal he had himſelf conſented to make to the General, aſſured his father of his obedience. They found, on enquiry, that General Tracy's ſervant had been ſent firſt to Weſt Wolverton; from whence Mrs. Somerive had, in the moſt terrifying ſtate of ſuſpenſe, haſtened him to Rayland Hall, where he now waited. Orlando therefore attended his father into his own room; where being furniſhed with pen and ink, Mr. Somerive wrote to the General in thoſe terms that appeared requiſite, and to which Orlando did not object. The letter was then inſtantly diſpatched by the ſervant: and thus ended an affair which had ſo much diſturbed the peace of the

Somerive

Somerive family, and threatened conſequences ſtill more painful. Somerive now ordered his ſon to return to Mrs. Rayland, ſhew her the General's letter, and inform her that the buſineſs was ended as much to his honour, as her higheſt notions of what was due to a deſcendant of Sir Hildebrand (whoſe blood was leſs alloyed than that of the reſt of his family) could exact. Somerive ſaid this with ſome degree of aſperity; for, though pleaſed with the partiality of Mrs. Rayland for Orlando, he could not but feel the contempt ſhe expreſſed towards himſelf. He told Orlando he expected him to dinner, and then returned home; his mind relieved from an intolerable load, and his heart ſwelling with gratitude towards his excellent friend General Tracy.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

EVERY one of the party who met at dinner, at Mr. Somerive's, were ready to worſhip the General, except Orlando, who ſtill felt himſelf diſſatisfied, and much diſpoſed to enquire by what converſation an accommodation had been ſo eaſily brought about. This enquiry, however, he, at his father's requeſt, forbore to make, and the General was perfectly ſatisfied with the gratitude expreſſed by the reſt of the family; and in the diſtant, but polite behaviour of Orlando, ſaw, what confirmed him in his original idea, that it would be much better if he was out of the way.—The charms of Iſabella had now ſuch an aſcendency in his imagination, that he determined nothing ſhould impede his deſigns;

ſigns; and he believed that the ſtraitened circumſtances of Somerive, of which he was no longer ignorant, would give him the means of obtaining his daughter.

Somerive had indeed communicated to him, as a friend, the uneaſy ſituation of his affairs, and deplored the conduct of his eldeſt ſon. At their next conference therefore alone, Tracy contrived, without forcing the converſation, to bring it round to that point; and when Somerive ſpoke of the diſtreſs which aroſe from the miſconduct of his ſon Philip, the General took occaſion to ſay, "It is indeed, my friend, a circumſtance extremely to be lamented—and, in my opinion, renders the ſituation of your youngeſt ſon much more critical. —I heartily wiſh he was in ſome profeſſion. Have you conſidered what I ſaid to you about the army?—I believe I could be of very material ſervice to you in that line."

"Dear General," exclaimed Somerive, "how much I feel myſelf indebted to you!

Yes, I certainly have thought of it; and the reſult of my reflections is, that if his mother conſented, if Mrs. Rayland did not object——"

"My good friend," interrupted the General, "can a man of your underſtanding, when the well-doing of ſuch a ſon is in queſtion, think that theſe *ifs* ſhould have any weight?—Mrs. Somerive, all tender as ſhe is, has too much ſenſe to indulge her fondneſs at the expence of her ſon's eſtabliſhment; and as to Mrs. Rayland—I have not indeed the honour to know her—but the only queſtion ſeems to be, will ſhe, or will ſhe not, provide for Orlando?—*If* ſhe will, why will ſhe not ſay ſo?—If ſhe will not, are not you doing your ſon an irreparable injury, in ſuffering him to waſte, in fruitleſs expectation, the beſt of his days?"

"It is very difficult," replied Mr. Somerive after muſing a moment, "very difficult to know how to act: Mrs. Rayland has a temper ſo peculiar, that if ſhe is once offended, it is for ever. Perhaps, however,

ſince I ſee ſhe piques herſelf on the military honours of her family, perhaps ſhe may not be diſpleaſed at Orlando's entering on the profeſſion of arms. She ſeemed much more eager to promote than to check his ardour in this affair with Sir John Belgrave: and as the Britiſh nation is now engaged in a quarrel with people whom ſhe conſiders as the deſcendents of the Regicides, againſt whom her anceſtors drew their ſwords, it is not, I think, very unlikely that ſhe might approve of her young favourite's making his firſt eſſay in arms againſt thoſe whom ſhe terms the Rebels of America."

"As to that," anſwered the General coldly, "it may be very well, in ſtarting the idea, to give her that notion; but in fact this campaign will end the unworthy conteſt.—Of this I have the moſt poſitive aſſurances from my military friends on the ſpot, as well as the firmeſt reliance on the meaſures adopted by Miniſters; and I am convinced that thoſe wretched, ragged fel-

lows, without diſcipline, money, clothes, or arms, will be unable longer to ſtruggle for their chimerical liberty. Probably they are by this time cruſhed; and therefore, as no more troops will be ſent out, your ſon will not, if you adopt this plan, be ſeparated from his family, and may ſtill occaſionally viſit this capricious old gentlewoman, who, unleſs ſhe differs much from the reſt of her ſex, of all ages and deſcriptions, will not like a handſome young fellow the leſs for having a cockade in his hat."

"Ah, General!" returned Somerive ſmiling, "I fancy your own experience among the women well juſtifies that remark. Since you really are ſo ſure that Orlando would not be ſent abroad, which will make a great difference certainly in his mother's feelings on this point, and perhaps in thoſe of Mrs. Rayland, I will take an immediate opportunity of ſpeaking of it to my wife, and we will conſider of the ſafeſt method of taking Mrs. Rayland's opinion upon it. As to Orlando himſelf,

there can be little doubt of his concurrence;—at leaſt I hope not. And there are other reaſons, my friend, beſides thoſe that I have named to you, why his preſent ſituation is utterly improper, and why it ſeems to me that he cannot too ſoon be removed from it."

Mr. Somerive, in ſpeaking thus, was thinking of Monimia, who, ever ſince he had firſt heard her deſcribed, had occurred to him continually. The neceſſity there was for attending immediately to the affair of the threatened duel, had hitherto prevented his ſpeaking of her to Orlando, in that ſerious manner which he thought the affair merited: but he had repeatedly touched on it; and finding Orlando ſhrink from the inveſtigation, he laid in wait for an occaſion to probe him more deeply—an occaſion which, perceiving his father ſought it, Orlando as ſolicitouſly endeavoured to avoid giving him, by contriving to be always buſied in attending on his ſiſters or his mother; but while he thus got out of

the way of his father, he was very much in that of the General, who could hardly ever get an opportunity of whiſpering to Iſabella thoſe ſentiments which daily acquired new force. For, the week following that when the affair with Sir John Belgrave was ſettled, Orlando could find no excuſe for returning to Rayland Hall of a night: he was therefore reduced to the neceſſity of going thither after his own family were in bed; and as the way through the chapel was not open to him, he could only ſee Monimia in her own room, and their meetings were therefore very ſhort, and ſo hazardous, that the impatience and diſcontent of Orlando could no longer be repreſſed or concealed.

The greater his attachment to Monimia became (and every hour it ſeemed to gather ſtrength), the more terrible appeared her ſituation, and his own. They were both ſo young that he thought he might eaſily obtain an eſtabliſhment, and that the noon of their lives might paſs in felicity together,

were

were he, inſtead of remaining in a ſtate of uncertain dependence, to be allowed to go forth into the world. Sanguine and romantic in the extreme, and feeling within himſelf talents which he was denied the power of exerciſing, his mind expatiated on viſionary proſpects, which he believed might eaſily be realized. When to provide for paſſing his life with Monimia was in queſtion, every thing ſeemed poſſible; and as he heard much of the rapid fortunes made in India, and had never conſidered, or perhaps heard of the means by which they were acquired, he fancied that an appointment there would put him in the high road to happineſs; and various were the projects of this and of many other kinds, on which his thoughts continually dwelt.

General Tracy, who had long read mankind, eaſily penetrated into the mind of a man ſo new to the world as Orlando; and though he ſaw that his young friend did not greatly eſteem him, he was not by that obſervation deterred from conciliating

as much as poſſible his good opinion, till at length Orlando communicated his diſcontent at being at his time of life ſo inactive and uſeleſs; and the General, having brought him to that confeſſion, ſtarted the ſcheme he had before propoſed only to his father, of procuring him a commiſſion, and lending him all the intereſt which he was known to poſſeſs, to promote his fortune in the army.

A propoſal ſo friendly, and ſo much adapted to the warm and ardent temper of Orlando, was acknowledged with gratitude, and without farther conſideration embraced, on condition that his family did not oppoſe it. The General told him, that it was in conſequence of his father's apparent inclinations that he had at firſt thought of it; that his mother had certainly too much ſenſe to reject ſuch an advantageous offer for him; "eſpecially," added he, "as from the preſent ſtate of the war, there is not the leaſt likelihood of your being ſent abroad. —You know beſt, however, my dear Sir,"

continued

continued the General, with ſomething on his countenance between a ſmile and a ſneer—" you know beſt how far your campaigns againſt the game on the Raylands' manors may anſwer better than the ſervices of a ſoldier, or whether the old lady's hands can beſtow a more fruitful prize than the barren laurels you may gather in bearing arms for your country."

There was in this ſpeech ſomething that conveyed to Orlando an idea that he was deſpiſed; and that there was meanneſs in his attending on Mrs. Rayland like a legacy hunter—of all characters the moſt deſpicable. The blood that ruſhed into his cheeks, ſpoke the painful ſenſations this impreſſion brought with it. He could not, however, expreſs them with propriety to a man whoſe only purpoſe ſeemed to be that of befriending him, by rouſing him from indolence, and even from a ſpecies of ſervitude. The General ſaw that what he ſaid had the effect he wiſhed; and Orlando left him, determined to avail himſelf

of the opportunity that now offered for obtaining what he believed would be a degree of independence. He began to conſider how he might prevail on Mrs. Rayland to aſſiſt, inſtead of oppoſing this ſcheme; and how he might thus obtain a certain portion of liberty, without offending one to whom gratitude and intereſt contributed to attach him. A deep and painful ſigh, raiſed by the reflection of the miſery of parting from Monimia, followed the reſolution he adopted; but he recollected that by no other means he could remove the cruel obſtacles between them, and that reſolution became confirmed.

He had not yet, however, the courage to communicate to her the probability there was that they muſt ſoon part. Their ſhort conferences, in every one of which they incurred the hazard of diſcovery, paſſed, on her ſide, in mournful preſentiments of future ſorrow, which ſhe yet endeavoured to conceal; and on his, in trying, now to conſole her, and now in acknowledging that there

was

was but too much cauſe for her fears: projects were conſidered, however, for their future meetings with leſs riſk. She told him, that during the time he was ſo much at home, her aunt confined her leſs ſtrictly through the day: that in proportion as ſhe found herſelf become more neceſſary to Mrs. Rayland, and more ſecure of a proviſion after her death, Mrs. Lennard became more indolent, and more addicted to her own gratifications. Betty, who was a very great favourite, had little elſe to do than to wait upon her; an employment in which Monimia herſelf was often engaged, though ſhe was now more uſually employed about the perſon of Mrs. Rayland, who found her ſo tender and attentive that ſhe began to look upon her with ſome degree of complaceney. This taſk, while it added a heavy link to her fetters, ſhe yet went through, not only with patience, but with pleaſure; for ſhe hoped that by making herſelf uſeful to Mrs. Rayland, ſhe might not only have more frequent opportunities

of ſeeing Orlando during the winter, which ſhe imagined he would paſs at the Hall, but perhaps obtain from her ſuch a ſhare of recollection at her death, as might remove the neceſſity of an entire dependence on Mrs. Lennard; a dependence which ſome late obſervations had made her believe as precarious as ſhe felt it to be painful.

In conſequence of General Tracy's viſit to Sir John Belgrave at the houſe of Mr. Stockton, he received from the maſter of it an invitation, which he accepted; Mr. Stockton firſt waiting upon him at Weſt Wolverton—Sir John, and Philip Somerive, with ſeveral others of the late viſitants at the Caſtle, were gone into Scotland on a ſhooting party; but Mr. Stockton had a ſucceſſion of viſiters.—His magnificent ſtyle of living, which it was known he had a fortune to ſupport, attracted not only all his London friends byturns to his houſe, but from every part of the country acquaintance poured in upon him; ac-

quaintance

quaintance who desired nothing better, in the way of entertainment, than his French cook and his well-furnished cellars afforded them.—The Clergy were his very constant guests; and he loved to have two or three of them always about him, at whom he might lanch those shafts of wit which he had picked up here and there, and which consisted of common-place jokes upon religion; well knowing, that with these select few, orthodox as they were, the excellence of the entertainment he gave them secured their silence and complaisance.

The General, who was in manners really a man of fashion, was by no means delighted with the gross and noisy society he found at Stockton: but he saw that if he would escape suspicion, he must not make his visit at Somerive's too long; and, therefore, was glad to be assured that there was an house in the immediate neighbourhood, where he might remain a fortnight or three weeks, after prudence dictated his departure from

that of Mr. Somerive; which he now feared muſt happen before his hopes with Iſabella were ſucceſsful, for he found it much more difficult to obtain any degree of favour than his own vanity and her giddineſs had at firſt led him to ſuppoſe.

Iſabella Somerive was not naturally a coquette: but ſhe had a greater flow of ſpirits than any of her family, except her elder brother, whom ſhe greatly reſembled in the thoughtleſs vivacity of his diſpoſition; but, from her ſex and education, what was in him attended with dangerous errors, was in her only wild but innocent gaiety, becoming enough to youth, health and beauty. Of that beauty ſhe had early learned the value: ſhe had heard it praiſed at home, and found her father and mother were pleaſed to hear of it. But during her ſhort ſtay in London ſhe had been intoxicated with the incenſe that was offered her; and, notwithſtanding the good humour inherent in her diſpoſition, ſhe failed not to enjoy, with ſome degree of feminine triumph, the preference

ference that was given her over her couſins, whoſe admirers ſeemed all diſpoſed to deſert them on the firſt appearance of this ruſtic beauty; and ſhe felt, too, the pleaſure of retaliation for all the airs of conſequence which the Miſs Woodfords had aſſumed in their viſits to Weſt Wolverton, from their ſuperior knowledge of faſhions, public places, and great people. But, above all, Iſabella was delighted by the preference given her by a judge ſo diſcerning as General Tracy—whoſe taſte in beauty was ſo univerſally allowed, that his admiration had given eminence to ſeveral pretty women, who would never otherwiſe have been noticed. Far however from thinking of him as a lover, Iſabella, who was, with all her vivacity, as innocent as little Emma herſelf, thought of him merely as her father's friend, and would have applied to him for advice, in as much expectation of receiving it with diſintereſted wiſdom, as to her father himſelf. The fine ſpeeches he took every opportunity of making, ſhe conſidered

partly

partly as ariſing from habit, and partly as proofs of his admiration; which ſhe believed perfectly harmleſs, though it ſometimes ſtruck her as ridiculous. And in converſation with her ſiſters, and ſometimes with her mother, ſhe laughingly called the General—her old beau—her venerable admirer, and ſaid ſhe wiſhed he was thirty years younger. Mrs. Somerive ſometimes checked her; but oftener ſmiled at the deſcription ſhe gave of the General's ſolemn gallantry, and of the trouble ſhe knew his toilet coſt him; "which really," cried ſhe, "grieves one's very heart. Poor man! it muſt be exceſſively fatiguing; and after all, I think he would be a thouſand times more agreeable, if he could be perſuaded to appear as my father and other men do, of the ſame age.—Inſtead of putting on toupees and curls, which it requires ſo much art and time to make ſit ſnug and look natural, how preferable would a good comfortable wig be to his poor old head! which I am ſure muſt ache ſadly every day, before

Beaumielle

Beaumielle has patched up the gaps that time has made!—and, beſides, I know he is always in fear of ſome of this borrowed chevelure's coming off, and diſgracing him; I have abſolutely ſeen him nervous about it."—"Dear Iſabella," ſaid Mrs. Somerive, who was preſent at this deſcription, "how you run on! The General, I dare ſay, has no falſe hair; and if he has, how does it materially differ from a wig?"

"Oh mamma!" replied her daughter, "I believe it differs ſo much in the General's opinion, that he had rather have his head cut off than his hair.—A wig! I have ſeen him ſhudder at the idea."

"You have ſeen him!" ſaid Mrs. Somerive: "pray when?"

"The other day, when he rode out with us. There was a terrible high wind, and I knew the ancient beau would be ten times more diſcompoſed by it than we were.—So, as ſoon as we got upon the downs, I ſet off with a briſk canter directly againſt it; and the

the poor dear General was obliged, you know, to follow us."—

"Well?"

"Well—and ſo he buttoned up the cape of his great coat round his ears, and ſet off after us; but as ill fortune would have it, this cape, I ſuppoſe, looſened the ſtrings of his curls, and the wind blew ſo unmercifully that he did not hear of their defection from his ears; but as he came gallopping up to me and Selina, who were a good way before him, theſe ill behaved curls deſerted, and were flying like two ſmall birds tied by the leg, half a yard behind him; and if he had been commander of a town ſuddenly blown up by the enemy, he could not have looked more amazed and diſmayed, than he did when I called out to him—General! General! your curls are flying away!—He put up his hand to his two ears alternately, and finding it too true that theſe cowardly curls had left their poſt, and were retained only

only by a bit of black twiſt, he gave them a twitch, and thruſt them into his pocket—while he ſaid moſt dolorouſly, "Ever ſince that fever I got laſt year by overheating myſelf walking with the King at Windſor, I have loſt my hair in ſome degree; and till it is reſtored I am under the neceſſity of wearing theſe awkward contrivances." Dear General, ſaid I, as if I pitied his diſtreſs, I am afraid you will catch cold without them. Had you not better wrap a handkerchief about your head?—I am ſure you muſt feel a difference—I am in pain for you!—It is, indeed, an awkward contrivance; and I ſhould think you would find more comfortable and certain accommodation in a wig."

"A wig!" exclaimed he—"a military man in a wig!—like a turtle-eating cit, or a Stock Exchange broker!—Impoſſible!—No! lovely Iſabella, you can never ſuppoſe I ought to make myſelf ſuch a figure; and I aſſure you I have, when not

hurt

hurt by illneſs, a very tolerable head of hair."

"For your time of life, General!" ſaid I,—This completed the poor good man's diſmay; and he ſet about aſſuring me, that the military hardſhips he had gone through in the younger part of his life, and perhaps a little irregularity ſince, made him look at leaſt fifteen years older than he was, and ſo went on making ſuch fine ſpeeches as he thinks becoming in ſo *young* a man.

"Upon my word, Iſabella," remarked Mrs. Somerive, "you will offend the General by all this flippancy; and your father, I aſſure you, would not be at all pleaſed if you ſhould."

"No, indeed, my dear mamma!" anſwered ſhe, "there is no danger of my offending him. The rattling ſpeeches I make to him, and even my turning him into ridicule when only Selina and I are by, is ſo far from offending him, that he ſeems to like it.—Does not he, Selina?"

"It

"It is not right, however, in my opinion," ſaid Selina.

"Why not, if you pleaſe, my Lady Graveairs?"

"Becauſe I do not think a perſon's age," replied Selina, "a proper ſubject of ridicule."

"No," anſwered Iſabella—"not if they do not make it ſo, by attempting to appear young; but how is it poſſible to help laughing at a man who fancies that, at ſixty, he can paſs for ſix-and-twenty?"

"If it is the General's foible," ſaid Mrs. Somerive gravely, "it ſeems to be the only one; and it makes him happy, and hurts nobody. He is ſo worthy a man that it is immaterial whether he is ſixty or ſix-and-twenty; and if he has the weakneſs to prefer being thought the latter, which, however, Iſabella, you know is not true, he ſhould not be rudely reminded that nobody elſe thinks ſo."

"Well, if this worthy man will flirt with and make love to girls young enough to be

be his grand-daughters, I muſt laugh, if it *be* wrong," cried Iſabella.

"Make love!" exclaimed Mrs. Somerive: "What do you mean, child?"

"Why—only, mamma, that if he were a young man, the marvellouſly fine ſpeeches he ſtudies would ſeem like love-making ſpeeches. I told him the other day, that ſince he thought me ſo very charming a creature, I wiſhed he would perſuade his nephew to be of the ſame opinion, for there would be ſome ſenſe in that."

"His nephew!—Who is his nephew?" enquired her mother.

"I never ſaw him," replied Iſabella; "but Eliza Woodford has often, and ſays he is the moſt elegant and the handſomeſt young man about town."

"Do you mean," ſaid Mrs. Somerive, "one of the ſons of his elder brother, Lord Taymouth?"

"Oh! not at all—they are both miſerable looking mortals:—No, this nephew, as Eliza tells me, is the only ſon of his ſiſter,

Lady

Lady Something Tracy, who married a Mr. Warwick, who, though a gentleman, her family thought was a match ſo much beneath her, that they never forgave her; and as ſhe and her huſband both died young, this young man, who was their only child, and had a very ſmall fortune, was brought up by the General, who means to make him his heir."

"He is a good creature," ſaid Mrs. Somerive; "and every thing I hear encreaſes my eſteem for him."

"You would conſent then, my dear mamma," replied Iſabella, "to my having Captain Warwick?"

"Alas!" anſwered her mother mournfully, "Captain Warwick, my dear girl, heir to the fortune of General Tracy, will never, I fear, *aſk* my conſent. Young women without fortune, though their merit be indiſputable, are not likely now to marry at all; very unlikely, indeed, to meet with ſuch high fortune."

I don't

"I don't ſee that at all," cried Iſabella. "Selina and Emma may determine to die old maids if they pleaſe; but, for my part, I'll try, as long as I am young and good looking, for a huſband; and as to this Warwick, I am bent upon ſetting my cap at him without mercy, if his uncle would but give me an opportunity. That he will not do; for though he is ſo good to him, and gives him ſuch an handſome allowance, he hardly ever ſees him; and has bought him a company in another regiment, rather than have him in his own, and ſo he is ſent off to America—and——"

"You have no chance then," interrupted Mrs. Somerive, "of trying your power, Iſabella?"

"No!" cried ſhe; "but it is excellent ſport to teize his uncle about him, who always avoids talking of him, juſt like a coquettiſh Mamma, who hates to hear that Miſs is tall and handſome."

Mrs. Somerive, again gently reproving her daughter for ſpeaking thus of the General,

neral, put an end to the converſation by ſending her daughters away to dreſs for dinner; while ſhe meditated alone on what her huſband had that morning ſaid to her on the ſubject of Orlando's entering the army. He had now, for the firſt time, explained to her all the reaſons he had for wiſhing his ſon removed from Rayland Hall; and had communicated the principal of theſe, his ſuſpicions of an attachment to Monimia. Mrs. Somerive felt all the truth of what her huſband urged in favour of this plan; and, particularly uneaſy at the information he had given her about Monimia, ſhe now tried to reaſon herſelf out of thoſe fears for his perſonal ſafety, which yet led her to wiſh he might remain, on whatever terms, near her and his family.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

THE family of Somerive was almoſt the only one in the county, or at leaſt within five and twenty miles, who had not waited on Mr. Stockton after his purchaſing the eſtates of Lord Carloraine. For this Mr. Somerive had ſeveral reaſons. Though he diſdained any mean compliances with the caprices of Mrs. Rayland, he thought it wrong to connect himſelf with a man who, on his firſt appearance in the country, had offended her unhandſomely enough; and he knew it would not only be impolitic in regard to her, but to the economy of his own family. His ſervants, plain and laborious, were at preſent content with their portion of work and of wages; but were they once introduced into ſuch a ſervants hall as that of the Caſtle, where the

the ſame profuſion reigned as was cuſtomary in the parlour, he knew they would immediately become diſcontented, and of courſe troubleſome and uſeleſs. The people whom he found were generally aſſembled at the Caſtle, moſt of them young men, celebrated for their diſſolute manners, were not ſuch as he wiſhed to have introduced to his daughters. And theſe cauſes co-operating to make him wiſh to avoid every acquaintance with Mr. Stockton, he had taken ſome pains to prevail on his eldeſt ſon to avoid it alſo; but Philip Somerive, who had ſome ſlight knowledge of Stockton in London, haſtened, in ſpite of his father's remonſtrances, to renew and ſtrengthen it as ſoon as he ſettled in the neighbourhood, and was very ſoon more at Stockton than at home. The ſimple economy of his father's houſe appeared to him a total deprivation of all that a gentleman ought to enjoy; and when contraſted with the voluptuous epicuriſm that reigned in the ſplendid manſion of his new friend, he had

not the courage to return to it oftener than want of money compelled him to do: and he forgot that to these temporary gratifications he was sacrificing the peace of his father, his mother, and his sisters; and laying up for himself all the miseries of indigence, and all the meanesses of dependence.

It was here he confirmed, by indulgence, that passion for play which he had acquired at college. The party at Carloraine Castle passed whole nights in gaming, where young Somerive often lost, but, alas! sometimes won; and in the triumph of his success, the pain and inconvenience of his ill fortune was forgotten. He learned some of those modes of ascertaining the matter, which he saw so happily practised by others; and, after some time, became, in some measure, one of the initiated, and had, in consequence, seldom occasion to apply to his father for money—therefore he seldom went near him; and sometimes whole months passed, during which his family never saw him,

him, though they knew that much of his time was paſſed with Mr. Stockton, whom this circumſtance contributed to render odious to Mr. Somerive.

After the acquaintance, however, commenced between Stockton and the General, Somerive found it very difficult to keep the ſame diſtance; and Stockton, who had a great inclination to ſee Somerive's handſome daughters, of whom he had heard ſo much, was ſo importunately civil, while General Tracy, on the other hand, promoted the acquaintance ſo warmly, that Somerive and Orlando engaged to dine with Stockton on one of thoſe days when he had invited half the county. The latter went with extreme reluctance; not only becauſe what he had heard of the man himſelf, and of the people who ſurrounded him, gave no favourable idea of the ſociety; but becauſe he thought it wrong to hazard offending Mrs. Rayland, in a point which to purſue, afforded no pleaſure either to his father or himſelf. Neither of theſe

reaſons for refuſing, however, could be urged to the General, who he thought already deſpiſed him for his aſſiduity about the old lady; and as his father had been induced to conſent, Orlando could not refuſe to accompany him.

The table was furniſhed with all that modern luxury has invented, or money could purchaſe: the greateſt variety of expenſive wines; and a ſuperb deſſert finiſhed a repaſt, at which were collected a group as various as their entertainment, though not ſo well choſen. The beginning of the dinner was paſſed in that ſort of talk which relates ſolely to eating: when that exerciſe relaxed, ſomething like an attempt at converſation was made. The laſt news from America was diſcuſſed; but as they all agreed in one ſentiment—that the rebellious coloniſts ought to be extirpated—there was no room for argument, and the diſcourſe ſoon languiſhed; and then again revived on topics nearer home—game, poachers, and turnpikes: the wine had by that time

circulated

circulated enough to give their converſation, if converſation it might be called, another turn. They grew noiſy and offenſive; and Orlando, who was never before among ſuch a ſet of people, nor had ever in his life heard ſuch language, was unable to conceal his diſguſt, though he only ſhewed it by ſilence, and by paſſing from him the bottle which he ſaw had ſo affected the little underſtanding that the majority of the company had poſſeſſed.

This was at length perceived by Mr. Stockton, who, accuſtomed to indulge himſelf in what he fancied ſhrewd ſayings, and to expect that every man not ſo rich as himſelf ſhould ſubmit to be his butt, began to attack Orlando on the ſcore of his being a milk-ſop, and living always in the lap of the old lady at the Hall.—To this Orlando anſwered with good humour, perfectly indifferent what ſuch a man as Stockton thought of him; but the latter ſeeing how well he bore this firſt attack, could not reſiſt the temptation of purſuing his blow.

"Why, damn it now!" cried he, "we knew very well, Sir Rowland (that was the name which Philip Somerive gave to his brother in deriſion), we know very well that you are no more of a ſaint than your neighbours; and that though you are in waiting on an old woman all day, you makes yourſelf amends at night with a young one—aye, and a deviliſh pretty wench ſhe is too as ever I ſaw.—Egad! Belgrave was half mad about her for a week, and had a mind to have ſtormed the tower where this dulcinea lives, notwithſtanding its being guarded by the fierce Sir Rowland.—I don't know her name.—Tell me, Sir Knight, how is your goddeſs called? and by the Lord we'll drink her health in a bumper!"

Mr. Somerive, who ſaw in the changes of Orlando's expreſſive countenance, that his anſwer would inevitably bring on another quarrel, aroſe haſtily, and, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Stockton, while he commanded Orlando to be ſilent, he ſaid, "After what paſſed, Mr. Stockton, in regard to Sir John Belgrave

grave and my ſon, this mention of the affair can but be conſidered as an inſult to us both. If that be your purpoſe, ſome other place than your own houſe ſhould have been found for it. We will now quit it, in order to give you an opportunity of purſuing it, without adding the breach of the laws of hoſpitality to thoſe of decency and good manners."

Somerive then taking Orlando by the arm, inſiſted on his going with nim; while the General, and ſome other men in the room, who were yet in poſſeſſion of their ſenſes, got round Stockton, who was very drunk, and repreſented how wrong it was to renew the converſation on Sir John Belgrave; an affair which had been ſettled with ſo much difficulty, and had threatened ſuch ſerious conſequences. The profeſſion, birth, and riches of General Tracy, gave him great authority in the opinion of even the wealthy and inſolent Stockton himſelf; and as he loved his eaſe, even beyond the

indulgence of his purſe-proud arrogance, he ſaw at once, that in gratifying the one, he had more than he intended riſked the other. He therefore ſent one of his dependents to apologize to the two Somerives, who had already left the room: General Tracy too went to aſſure them of Stockton's concern for what had paſſed; excuſed it by alledging his inebriety, and declared that he ſhould think both Mr. Somerive and his ſon wrong to take any further notice of the idle words of a man who was himſelf convinced of their impropriety. "We will talk of all this at our leiſure, dear General," replied the elder Somerive: "at preſent you muſt allow me to take Orlando from an houſe, into which I am heartily concerned that either of us ever entered."

"I will go with you, my dear friend," cried the General; "but firſt allow me to return to poor Stockton, who is extremely concerned for what has happened, and to tell him——"

"Any

"Any thing you pleaſe from yourſelf, Sir," ſaid Orlando interrupting him; "but nothing from me, unleſs it be——"

"Leave the matter to *me*, Orlando," cried Somerive ſternly. "You know, General," added he, addreſſing himſelf to his friend, "how little it can be my wiſh to have this ridiculous matter go any farther; but as I never yet bore a premeditated inſult myſelf, ſo I will not aſk Orlando to do it, be the conſequences what they may."

"Good God!" exclaimed the General, "this was no premeditated inſult; it was merely the folly of a man in a condition which diſarms reſentment, even from thoſe of the moſt quick feelings."

"He muſt tell me ſo himſelf, then," ſaid Orlando.

"I will undertake that he ſhall," anſwered the General; "and ſo you leave the houſe ſatisfied, I hope?"

To this the elder Somerive anſwered drily: "Bleſſed are the peacemakers, my good General!" and then, leaving him to

return, if he pleaſed, to his new friends, he mounted his horſe, which, with that of Orlando's, his ſervants had brought to the door, and they proceeded homeward together.

This was the opportunity of ſpeaking to Orlando, that his father had been ſome days watching for; and the ſcene that had juſt paſſed, awakening all his fears about Monimia, was an additional motive to him not to neglect it.

Orlando, whoſe heart was burſting with indignation at the inſult offered to her name, rode ſilently by his ſide, expecting, with a mixture of concern and confuſion, that his father would again preſs him on his attachment. He was ſtudying, without being able to determine, how he ſhould anſwer. He had never been guilty of a falſehood; and could he now reconcile himſelf to the meanneſs of attempting one, he believed it would be fruitleſs; yet, to betray the tender, truſting, timid Monimia—to acknowledge their clandeſtine meetings, which his

his father might not be perſuaded were innocent—and to render himſelf liable to be forbidden ever again to ſee her—how was it poſſible to determine on riſking it, by an avowal of the truth? There was not much time for this painful debate. Mr. Somerive put his horſe into a walk, and then ſaid, in that grave and earneſt manner which always affected his ſon—

"You ſee, Orlando, all the miſchief to which this boyiſh and indiſcreet love of yours has expoſed, not only yourſelf, but the young woman who is, unluckily for her, the object of it."

"Love, Sir!" ſaid Orlando, not knowing very well what to ſay.

"Nay, Sir," cried Somerive more ſternly, "don't affect ignorance; you have been playing the fool with that young girl that Lennard paſſes for her niece. Anſwer me honeſtly—have you not?

"No, Sir—never."

"Have a care, young man—I can par-

don the follies of youth, but premeditated falſehood I never will forgive."

"Be ſo good then, my dear father, to explain preciſely your meaning; and when I perfectly underſtand the charge, I will anſwer it as truly as if I were on oath."

"The girl is handſome?" ſaid Somerive.

"Certainly," anſwered Orlando.

"And you have informed her of it, no doubt?"

"Pardon me, Sir, I never have; and I believe ſhe is at this moment unconſcious of it."

"Really! that is wonderful.—She is employed, I think, in the houſe as a kind of under houſekeeper."

"No, Sir; but ſhe ſometimes undertakes part of her aunt's buſineſs when ſhe is engaged or indiſpoſed, and ſometimes attends Mrs. Rayland."

"And lives, I ſuppoſe, as Lennard does, in the parlour with the Lady?

"Very rarely, Sir, and as a matter of great favour ſhe dines there, and rather oftener,

oftener, though ſtill not regularly, is allowed to drink tea in the parlour."

"Humph!—and at other times, I ſuppoſe, ſhe takes her ſeat at the table allowed Snelcraft and Pattenſon: the latter worthy man is celebrated, I think, for his various and ſucceſsful amours under the roof of my very pious kinſwoman. This poor girl, I ſuppoſe, is in the way of adding to the trophies of that excellent and faithful ſervant. Upon my word, Orlando, you may find him a very formidable rival."

"Gracious Heaven, Sir!" cried Orlando, who could not bear even the ſuppoſition, "what miſtaken notions you have formed of Monimia!"

"Monimia!" exclaimed Somerive, who, ſerious as the matter was, could not help ſmiling:—"Monimia!—why thou art far gone, my poor boy, ſince thou haſt found ſuch a name for thy nymph—Monimia! I muſt be allowed, ſince we are talking plainly of the matter, to call her Mary."

"You may call her what you pleaſe, Sir,"

Sir," replied Orlando very impatiently, "ſo as you do juſtice to her innocence and goodneſs. Suffer me to ſpeak, Sir," added he, finding his father about to interrupt him—"ſuffer me to declare to you, that not one of your own daughters, my ſiſters, whom I ſo tenderly love, are more innocent, or more worthy of reſpect and eſteem, and, let me add, of admiration, than this young woman."

"Indeed! is that your opinion?—Pray, Orlando, what means have you had of being ſo well informed of all theſe perfections, which you are ſo willing to put in compariſon with thoſe of your own family?"

"Continual experience, amounting to perfect conviction."

"Truly that is marvellous, conſidering this young perſon, according to your own account a ſervant, ſo ſeldom drinks tea, and ſo much ſeldomer dines with Mrs. Rayland, where, I ſuppoſe, ſhe is not allowed any great ſhare of the converſation, even when ſhe *is* admitted;—though you

are willing to put her on a level with your ſiſters, I ſuppoſe you hardly ſo practiſed this levelling principle on yourſelf, as to purſue your ſtudies of this miracle to the table of the great Snelcraft, and greater Pattenſon."

"No, Sir," retorted Orlando warmly; "nor does Monimia ever ſit at that table."

"May I then aſk, without offending this lady, whoſe nom de guerre is I find ſettled to be Monimia—where you have ſeen enough of her to form a judgment ſo much in her favour?"

"That may be done by ſeeing her once. You yourſelf, my dear father!" added Orlando extremely moved, "if you were once to ſee her, would not blame me for what I have ſaid. Indeed you would not: you would own that ſhe is all I have deſcribed."

"Poor boy!" cried Mr. Somerive with a deep ſigh; "at your age I remember thinking juſt the ſame of a very handſome girl. I too have had my Monimia! my Celinda, my Leonora; and many were the heart-

heart-achs theſe beauties gave me. I ſhould, therefore," continued he, in a more ſolemn tone—" I ſhould, therefore, my dear Orlando! paſs over this juvenile paſſion, and not even enquire about it, if, from the peculiarity of your ſituation, and that of the young woman, as well as from your tendency to romantic quixotiſm, which perhaps I have too much encouraged, I did not fear that it may end more ſeriouſly. She is very pretty! and you are very young, and very much in love! If ſhe is innocent——"

" *If!*—Good God, Sir, what ſhall I ſay to convince you of it?"

" Nothing, Orlando; ſpeak ſimply the truth, and I will attend to you: allow me to finiſh the ſentence—If ſhe is innocent and amiable, as you *believe* her to be, you would not certainly deſtroy that innocence? you would not render her unamiable?"

" Not for a million of worlds!" cried Orlando eagerly.

" Well, then, Orlando, in order to reconcile

concile your honour with that love which it ſeems you do not affect to deny, it follows that you would marry her?"

"Moſt undoubtedly, Sir, I would."

"To throw yourſelf out for ever from every hope of favour on the part of Mrs. Rayland; and, while you render your own family miſerable, to entail poverty for life, on the woman you love, and her children?"

"I know it all but too well: permit me, however, Sir, to ſay, that as to my family, I do not ſee why they ſhould make themſelves miſerable about it, ſince the morals, the manners, the perſon of my wife, could be no diſgrace to them; and if I choſe to work for her, ſurely I have a right to live with whom I pleaſe."

"To work!" cried Somerive angrily. How work?—you who are in no profeſſion, and could not even ſupport yourſelf?

"Pardon me, Sir," anſwered Orlando," "and let it not offend you, if I ſay, that a young man of almoſt one and twenty, ſix feet high, and in perfect health, muſt be

a very

a very contemptible wretch, indeed, if he is unable to obtain a proviſion for himſelf, and to provide for his wife."

"Wild and ridiculous!" exclaimed Somerive. "If you were twelve feet high, and had as many hands as Briareus, how could you employ them? you who have been brought up to nothing, who know nothing——"

"That, Sir, is my misfortune—ſurely not my fault."

"I allow it. It is a misfortune to which I ſee other misfortunes are annexed, if a remedy be not inſtantly found. I perceive, Orlando, that this matter, on which it is plain you have thought deeply, is likely to be even more ſerious than I apprehended. I muſt find a profeſſion for you, which ſhall take you out of a ſituation ſo hazardous. I underſtood General Tracy, that if a commiſſion could be obtained, you expreſſed no diſinclination to enter the army?"

"Certainly I do not.—And let my readineſs,

readineſs, or rather my eagerneſs to embrace that offer convince you, Sir, that whatever may be my future hopes, I do not mean to involve Monimia in my preſent difficulties, nor to aſpire to happineſs till I have earned it. Put me, Sir, inſtantly to the proof. Procure for me a commiſſion, or ſend me out a volunteer. You ſhall not find me ſhrink from any taſk you may impoſe upon me. But, in return, I expect not to be compelled to reſign the hope that will alone animate me—I love Monimia paſſionately; I ſhall always love her; and I will not promiſe to reſign her for ever."

"I ſhall leave all that to time and abſence," anſwered Somerive; "and inſiſt on nothing but that you will join with me in prevailing on Mrs. Rayland to hear of your entering into the army without diſſatisfaction. Though I wiſh you to have the means of being in ſome degree independent, it were folly to forfeit needleſsly your expectations from her. Try, therefore, ſo to manage this as to obtain her conſent."

"Mrs.

"Mrs. Rayland will not, I really believe, oppoſe it," ſaid Orlando.

"Try her," anſwered his father; "on your ſincerity in doing ſo I ſhall rely: and remember Orlando, that if from any other artful quarter attempts are made to perſuade her againſt conſenting to this plan, I have only to inform her of your curious plan of marrying her houſekeeper's niece, and put her upon enquiring into the intrigue you are carrying on, and you would be baniſhed for ever from Rayland Hall."

"There would be as little wiſdom in that, Sir," ſaid Orlando with great warmth, "as there is truth in imputing an intrigue or art to Monimia. However, you are to do as you pleaſe."

"And you, Sir," retorted Somerive warmly, "ſeem to think yourſelf authoriſed to ſay what you pleaſe.—Let not my indulgence, which has ruined your brother, and now I ſee is likely to be your deſtruction; let not my indulgence hitherto, lead you to depend too much upon it. You

ſhall

ſhall find, Sir, that if you are ungrateful and undutiful, I can be harſh, and can make myſelf obeyed. But here, for the preſent, I deſire to end the diſcourſe. We are near home, and I will not have your mother made uneaſy, either by the report of what happened to-day at dinner, or by any knowledge of your folly, which has not yet reached her. I ſhall go immediately to my ſtudy; and I recommend it to you to go to your own room, and not appear to-night; for your mother, you know well, is is ſo accuſtomed to penetrate into my thoughts and yours, that ſhe will not fail to perceive that ſomething is wrong—and ſhe ſhall not be rendered unhappy."

Orlando, moſt willing to obey his father in this reſpect, made no other anſwer than wiſhing him a good night; and as ſoon as he diſmounted at home, he retired to his own room, and, with mingled ſenſations of reſentment and ſorrow, of anger and deſpondency, began to reflect on what had paſſed

paſſed during the day. The inſolent language uſed by Stockton ſtung him to the ſoul. He ſaw too evidently, that his nightly meetings with Monimia were ſuſpected, if not known—known to the unprincipled and profligate Stockton, who had put the moſt odious conſtruction on the conduct of the innocent Monimia. Yet he was compelled alſo to allow, that whatever might be the ſuſpicions or opinions concerning her, he could not avenge or defend her, without being too well aſſured that conſequences muſt enſue ſtill more fatal to her. If their intercourſe was once ſuſpected by Mrs. Rayland, he knew that Monimia would be diſmiſſed with diſgrace; that ſhe would probably be abandoned by her aunt, and thrown upon the world, where he had not the power of protecting her from poverty, though he might guard her from inſult. The only comfort he had was, that his father, when his interrogatories ſeemed moſt hardly to preſs him to declare how

and

and where he met Monimia, had been diverted to other diſcourſe; that he had, therefore, not been reduced either to tell him a falſehood, or to betray the ſecret of the door which admitted him to the turret; a ſecret of which he yet hoped to avail himſelf, in the interval that muſt occur between the time of his returning to the Hall and his departure for the army, which he now ſaw was certain. He now felt no wiſh more ardent than that of reconciling his Monimia to his going, exchanging with her mutual vows of eternal affection, and ſetting forth in the certainty of her remaining under the protection of Mrs. Lennard, and in the hope that he ſhould return in a ſituation that might enable him to aſk her hand, and to render her ſubſequent life as happy as the fondeſt love and competent fortune could make it. But Orlando ſaw too plainly, that if his evening conferences were known to his father, he would, at whatever riſk of ruining him for ever with Mrs. Rayland, put an end to them; and therefore,

as more caution than ever was requiſite, he determined, for one night, to refrain from the ſhort and dangerous indulgence he had ſnatched by travelling from Wolverton to the Hall in the middle of the night; and, though Monimia expected him, to forbear ſeeing her till the next evening, when he hoped to have arranged in his mind what it was the moſt neceſſary to ſay, to make her ſubmit with compoſure to their ſeparation. Then too he hoped to know ſomething certain of this commiſſion, of which the General hourly expected intelligence from London; and that he ſhould not, by ſpeaking with uncertainty, add ſuſpenſe to the other uneaſy ſenſations he muſt inflict on Monimia. He flattered himſelf alſo, that he ſhould hear of the General's having fixed the day of his departure. He had now been a fortnight at Weſt Wolverton; and though his ſtay ſeemed, the more it was prolonged, to yield to the reſt of the family encreaſed ſatisfaction, Orlando,

whom

whom it detained from the Hall, began to think it the moſt tedious and unconſcionable viſit that ever one friend paid to another; and, far from ſuſpecting the real motive, thought with aſtoniſhment on General Tracy's living ſo long among people ſo unlike his uſual aſſociates, and ſo much out of his way.

CHAP. V.

TO reconcile Monimia to his departure, to hide from her the anguiſh of his own heart at the knowledge that he muſt go, were no light taſks to Orlando: they were ſuch as all his courage, all his ſenſe of propriety, were nearly unequal to. What would become of her when he was gone? From his earlieſt remembrance, the certainty of ſeeing Monimia at the Hall had conſtituted his principal happineſs: yet *he* had many other amuſements abroad; he had many relations whom he loved, and who tenderly loved him; he had ſeveral purſuits to engage his mind, and ſeveral amuſements to occupy his time.--Monimia! alas! what had Monimia? Almoſt alone in the world, *ſhe* had no connection but her

her aunt, whoſe reluctant kindneſs and cold friendſhip anſwered but ill to the affectionate temper of the lovely girl, who would have been attached to her, all repulſive as her manners were, from gratitude, and becauſe ſhe believed her the only relation ſhe had, if Mrs. Lennard had given her leave.—But, ſelfiſh, narrow-minded, and overbearing, it was impoſſible for Monimia to love her; and ſhe once remarked, when ſhe ſtole for five minutes (while her aunt attended Mrs. Rayland to a morning viſit) into the garden with Orlando, that ſhe reſembled a paſſion-flower, that having once been ſupported by a ſort of eſpalier, the wood had decayed, and, nothing being put in its place, the plant crept along the ground, withering, from the dampneſs to which it was expoſed. "See," cried Monimia, "this plant reſembles me! It ſeems abandoned to its fate." Orlando remembered what he then ſaid to drive from her mind ſuch gloomy ideas; but now they were about to be verified. If Monimia

was to him all that hitherto ſweetened his exiſtence, he was at leaſt as neceſſary to hers; and a thouſand painful fears aſſailed his heart, as to what ſhe muſt feel at parting, and what would be her fate when he was gone.

No overture on the affair of his accepting a commiſſion had yet been made to Mrs. Rayland. Mr. Somerive wiſhed Orlando to manage it himſelf.—Orlando, conſcious that much depended upon it, and unwilling to take any deciſive ſtep, however neceſſary, as long as he could avoid it, had ſtill put it off from hour to hour; ſaying, what was indeed true, that he was now ſo ſeldom at the Hall at hours when it was proper to ſpeak of buſineſs, that he had found no opportunity.

The next day, however, but one after the dinner at Stockton's, the family were much ſurpriſed by the unexpected return of Philip Somerive; who, arriving late in the evening, told his father and mother that he was come, with their permiſſion, to

paſs

paſs ſome months at home. Tenderly anxious about him as they all were, and ever flattering themſelves that a change of conduct would reſtore him to them, his family received him with ſuch expreſſions as evinced that they were ready to kill the fatted calf: Orlando felt even more pleaſure than the reſt at his return; and the younger, unlike the elder brother in the parable, murmured not that there was joy and feaſting when he who had been loſt was found. Yet this did not ariſe altogether from the diſintereſted generoſity of his nature. He would at any time have rejoiced that his brother's appearance gave comfort to the hearts of his father and his mother: he now doubly rejoiced, becauſe the preſence of Philip Somerive at home diſmiſſed Orlando, almoſt as a matter of courſe, to the Hall. He had at this time inhabited the apartment ſet aſide for his brother; his own was occupied by the ſervant of the General, who was too fine a gentleman to be ſent into the attic ſtory.

Weſt Wolverton houſe was not a large one; and Orlando, not ſo well diſguiſing his impatience as he attempted to do, ſaid to his mother as ſoon as tea was over, that he knew his ſtay that night muſt be attended with ſome inconveniencies and removals, and therefore he would, with her permiſſion and his father's, go back to the Hall. Mrs. Somerive immediately aſſented, and ſaid, "And you had better, if your father pleaſes, ſet out directly, Orlando, or you will not have your bed aired; and I am ſure that little tapeſtry room where you ſleep, as it is on the ground floor, and has windows only to the north, and thoſe windows only long old-faſhioned caſements, muſt be horribly damp."

"If you will have the goodneſs then to ſay to my father that I am gone, and why gone ſo early," ſaid Orlando, "it will be better than my diſturbing the company with the ceremony of—Good-night!"

To this Mrs. Somerive aſſenting, Orlando left the room to get his horſe; but as he

he paſſed through the hall, he met his ſiſter Selina. "Good night, ſweet girl!" ſaid he, kiſſing her hand as he paſſed her.

"Whither are you going, then, Orlando?" enquired ſhe.

"To the Hall—You know there is no convenient room for me now; and ſince Philip is come back, I am leſs wanted."

At this moment Mr. Somerive paſſed through the hall, and, catching ſome of theſe words, he put the ſame queſtion to Orlando; who anſwered, "that his mother had agreed to his going to the Hall, to make room for his brother; and promiſed, Sir, to name it to you," added he.

Mr. Somerive pauſed a moment—"To the Hall," ſaid he, "Orlando! You are in great haſte, I ſee. Surely you might have ſtaid to ſupper, as you have not ſeen your brother ſo long."

Orlando then gave his mother's reaſon for his going earlier. "That," ſaid his father gravely, "is a very good reaſon for your mother; and *you*, I have no doubt,

have ſome of ſtill greater weight:—but remember, Orlando," continued he more ſternly, "remember I will not be *trifled* with. Go—I wiſh you a good night, and as much repoſe as your *conſcience* will let you taſte when you render your father unhappy!"

Mr. Somerive then paſſed on; and Selina, who had hardly ever in her life heard him ſpeak as if half angry to her brother Orlando, remained amazed and trembling, clinging to his arm. "Good God!" cried ſhe as ſoon as her father had ſhut the parlour-door, what is all this, my dear brother? what does my father mean?"

"Can you, Selina," ſaid Orlando in a low and mournful voice—"can you be very faithful, very guarded on a point where my life depends on ſecrecy? Can you, Selina, be ſecret as the grave, if I truſt you?"

"Can you doubt it?" anſwered the ſtill more alarmed Selina.—"Well, then, to-morrow, perhaps—for to-morrow I muſt be here again—to-morrow, Selina, if I obtain

permiſſion

permiſſion from another perſon yet more intereſted than I am, I will perhaps tell you. In the mean time adieu, my dear ſiſter!—If you hear Philip mention me at ſupper to my father, try to remember what he ſays."

Orlando then haſtened away, fearful of being detained; and as the weather was ſerene, he determined to go on foot, that, if he found all quiet round the apartment of Monimia, he might glide up for a moment to appriſe her that they might without interruption meet in his ſtudy that evening. There was a late moon, and the night promiſed to be beautifully clear; he knew therefore that there was little or no hazard of brandy and tea-merchants being abroad: and as to the hint dropt by Stockton, which had at firſt given him ſo much pain, he now fancied it was merely the random folly of a drunkard, and that he knew nothing of Monimia but what he might have collected from Philip Somerive

after their firſt unlucky meeting in the woods.

Had he now taken his horſe, he muſt of neceſſity have made his return known to the ſtable-ſervants at the Hall, before he could have a moment's converſation with Monimia: he proceeded therefore quickly on foot, meditating as he went on what had juſt paſſed with his father and his ſiſter.

He had often thought of entruſting Selina with the ſecret of his paſſion for Monimia. He had often wiſhed they were known to each other. Equally innocent, amiable, and gentle, with a perfect reſemblance in temper and in years, he believed that they would fondly love each other; and that if he could ſee them attached to each other, it would be the happieſt circumſtance of his life. He hoped too, that the ſociety and the ſoothing ſweetneſs of Selina would be a reſource of comfort to his Monimia when he was far from her. But how he could bring them together, he had yet

yet no idea—Selina being never admitted but on days of ceremony at Rayland Hall; and Monimia being ſo nearly a priſoner, that the unlucky excurſion which occaſioned them all ſo much trouble, was almoſt the firſt, and was, in conſequence of her ſtay, which had given ſo much offence, likely to be the laſt her aunt would allow her to make. He propoſed, however, to conſult Monimia upon it, and to conſider whether ſome ſafe means of their meeting could be found.

Between that gate of the park that lay towards Weſt Wolverton, and the houſe, there were two paths. The upper one was over an eminence where the park paling encloſed part of the down, under which it ſpread a verdant boſom, with coppices and tall woods interſperſed. The other path, which in winter or in wet ſeaſons was inconvenient, wound down a declivity, where the furze and fern were ſhaded by a few old hawthorns and ſelf-ſown firs: out of the hill ſeveral ſtreams were filtered, which uniting at its foot, formed a large and clear

pond of near twenty acres, fed by ſeveral imperceptible currents from other eminences which ſheltered that ſide of the park; and the baſon between the hills and the higher parts of it being thus filled, the water found its way over a ſtony boundary, where it was paſſable by a foot-bridge unleſs in time of floods; and from thence fell into a lower part of the ground, where it formed a conſiderable river; and, winding among willows and poplars for near a mile, again ſpread into a ſtill larger lake, on the edge of which was a mill, and oppoſite, without the park paling, wild heaths, where the ground was ſandy, broken, and irregular, ſtill however marked by plantations made on it by the Rayland family. It was along the lower road, which went through woods to the edge of what was called the upper pond, that Orlando took his way. Juſt as he arrived at the water, from the deep gloom of the tall firs through which he paſſed, the moon appeared behind the oppoſite coppices, and threw her long

long line of trembling radiance on the water. It was a cold but clear evening, and, though early in November, the trees were not yet entirely ſtripped of their diſcoloured leaves:—a low wind ſounded hollow through the firs and ſtone-pines over his head, and then faintly ſighed among the reeds that crowded into the water: no other ſound was heard, but, at diſtant intervals, the cry of the wild fowl concealed among them, or the dull murmur of the current, which was now low. Orlando had hardly ever felt himſelf ſo impreſſed with thoſe feelings which inſpire poetic effuſions;—Nature appeared to pauſe, and to aſk the turbulent and troubled heart of man, whether his ſilly purſuits were worth the toil he undertook for them? Peace and tranquillity ſeemed here to have retired to a tranſient abode; and Orlando, as ſlowly he traverſed the narrow path over ground made hollow by the roots of theſe old trees, ſtepped as lightly as if he feared to diſturb them. Inſenſibly he began to compare this

ſcene,

ſcene, the ſcenes he every day ſaw of rural beauty and rural content, with thoſe into which his deſtiny was about to lead him—"Oh, Monimia!" ſighed he, "why cannot I remain with thee in this my native country? How happy ſhould I be to be allowed to cultivate one of the ſmalleſt of thoſe farms which belong to the Rayland eſtate, and, compriſing in thy ſociety and that of my family all my felicity, have no wiſh but to live and die without reading that great book which they call the World!—Alas! ſhall I ever underſtand its language? ſhall I ever become an adept in the principles it teaches? and ſhall I be happier if I do?—But they tell me, that a young man ſhould not be idle; that he muſt be ſomething, a lawyer or a ſoldier: and yet, to aſſiſt men in ruining each other, and ſpoiling the ſimple dignity of juſtice, ſeems the buſineſs of the firſt; and to learn the art of deſtroying honourably our fellow-men, the whole concern of the ſecond.—There are, however, other profeſſions, it is true—

true—I might be a clergyman, and remain here, with little to do but to ride twenty or thirty miles of a Sunday, to execute, with the hurry of a poſtman, the duties I ſhould have ſworn to fulfil: and can I conſcientiouſly do what I ſee done every day? Impoſſible!—I might too be a merchant: but that I have no talents for a profeſſion, honourable as I allow it to be, where the mind is continually chained to the calculation of profit and loſs; and if I am to enter into active life, let it be rather in any line than that which ſhall confine my activity to a compting-houſe—For then, Monimia! I muſt equally leave thee, and live among thoſe who value nothing but money, and who would ridicule a paſſion like mine." —He pauſed, and again looked around him. "How beautiful a ſcene!" continued he; "I would that Monimia were here to enjoy it!—But never am I allowed to point out to her theſe lovely proſpects, never permitted to cultivate that pure and elegant taſte which ſhe has received from nature;

nature; and I am now about to tell her that we are to part, never perhaps to meet more!—Yet the die is caſt: I have promiſed—nay, I ought to obey my father—and I go——" A deep and mournful reverie ſucceeded, as, walking onward, his rapid imagination deſcribed to him all the ſad poſſibilities that might ariſe between him and his happineſs. In this deſponding temper, but without meeting any one to interrupt him in his intended viſit to Monimia, he reached the turret, and ſoftly and ſilently aſcended the ſtair-caſe. He took the uſual precautions to aſcertain that Monimia was alone; and then, being admitted for a moment to ſpeak to her, he aſſured her that ſhe might, without any danger, venture to his room that evening. He told her he had much to ſay to her—much, on which their future happineſs depended, to offer to her conſideration; and therefore he beſought her to diveſt herſelf of her fears, and to oblige him. Monimia, confiding entirely in him, promiſed to be ready;

ready; and Orlando, then going through the ſervants' hall as if he had that moment arrived from Weſt Wolverton, deſired Betty to make up his fire and prepare his bed, ſaying, that he was come back to his own apartments, on the arrival of his brother at home. He then enquired of Pattenſon, if he thought Mrs. Rayland could be ſpoken to that evening? "I know nothing of the matter," anſwered the old butler in a very ſullen tone; "you may aſk the women-folks, as you're always a-dangling after them.—When I ſaw Madam laſt, ſhe was not in a way very like to be troubled with company to-night."

Orlando, angry and diſguſted by this rudeneſs, now enquired of the cook, who, though ſhe rivalled in perſon and features the dame Leonarda of Gil Blas, was a great admirer of beauty in others, and had always beheld Orlando with partial eyes. "Is Mrs. Rayland ill, then, Martha?" ſaid he. "Not that I knows on," replied the woman—"Only a few twinges of the gout about

about her feet, much as ordinary, that makes her, I reckon, a little peeviſh: and I underſtood that Madam was a little out of ſorts at hearing nothing of you yeſterday; and they've been a-telling her as how you dined out with them there gentlefolks at the Caſtle, as Madam hates worſe than any varmint."

"So," thought Orlando, "I am at length become of conſequence enough to be miſſed if I am longer abſent than uſual! but the officious malice of whoever it was that related our dinner party yeſterday, has probably ſpoiled my reception.—Can you tell me, Martha, whether your lady is likely to ſee me to-night, if I ſend up for leave?"

"Lord! I'll anſwer for't," anſwered the cook; "ifackins, I believe Madam, if ſhe was fairly left to herſelf, is always as glad to ſee you as can be—I'll go up now, if you pleaſe, and let her know you be here."

This courteous offer Orlando readily accepted; and in a few moments Martha returned. "Well, Martha, may I go up?" enquired

enquired he. "Yes, you may," replied Martha; "but Madam's not in one of her ſugar-plum humours, I can tell you.—She've got the gout in her foot, and ſhe've got ſome vagaries in her head about your going to viſit her innimies: you'll have a few ſour looks, I doubt—but, Lord! Maſter Orlando, you've ſuch a good-looking pleaſant countenance, that I'll defy the witch of Endor to be anger'd long with you."

Then, thanking his ambaſſadreſs for the trouble ſhe had taken, and being ſomewhat encouraged by her opinion of the powers of his countenance, he walked up ſtairs.

He tapped at the door, as was his cuſtom; and was, by the ſhrill ſharp voice of Mrs. Lennard, directed to come in. He was ſtruck, on entering the room, by the ſight of Monimia, who ſtood near the fire watching the moment when a ſaucepan, in which ſome medicine Mrs. Rayland was cauſing to be made, ſhould be ready to remove.

move. Without, however, noticing her, he approached his venerable couſin, in whoſe countenance, which ſeemed to have gained no additional ſweetneſs, he did not read a very favourable anſwer to his enquiry of—how ſhe found herſelf?

"No matter how," replied ſhe with abrupt aſperity; "if it had been of any conſequence to you, you would have aſked yeſterday, I ſuppoſe."

"I was detained all day by my father, Madam; and I do moſt truly aſſure you (and never was any declaration more ſincere than this of Orlando), that I was very unhappy at being detained all day from the Hall."

"Humph!" cried Mrs. Rayland, "your new friends no doubt made you amends. I thought, Sir, you had known that when people go *there*, I never deſire to ſee them *here*, not I. I wiſh, if you like ſuch acquaintance, you had taken the hint. But perhaps you thought that you might take to your brother's courſes, and no harm done. For my

my part, I ſhall waſh my hands of any concern about it, let what will be the end on't."

Orlando now began with calmneſs, yet without any thing like ſycophant ſubmiſſion, to account for his father's having been led by the entreaties of General Tracy, to whom he thought himſelf much obliged, to break through a reſolution he had taken never to viſit at Carloraine Caſtle:—"a reſolution," added Orlando, "that he now heartily wiſhes he had adhered to, as he found the ſociety ſuch as he neither approves for me, or can endure for himſelf. I aſſure you, Madam, he never intends to repeat an experiment, which nothing but his wiſhes to oblige the General made him conſent to now."

"Well," ſaid Mrs. Rayland, a little appeaſed, "it is very wonderful to me that General Tracy, a man of family, can aſſociate with theſe low-bred upſtarts—people who always will give one the notion of having got into the coaches they were deſigned

to

to drive—But ſo goes this world! Money does every thing—money deſtroys all diſtinctions!—Your Creoles and your Eaſt India people over-run every body—Money, money does every thing."

"There is one thing, however, Madam," anſwered Orlando, "that it does not ſeem to have done—It does not appear to me to have given to this Mr. Stockton, either the mind or the manners of a gentleman."

"Indeed, child!" cried the old lady: "Well, I am glad that you learn to diſtinguiſh.—Poor wretch! I've heard that his father walked up out of Yorkſhire without ſhoes, and was taken by ſome rich packer to clean his warehouſe, and go on errands. Well, ſo it is in trade!—So you think him vulgar and ill-bred?—But I ſuppoſe you had a very profuſe entertainment: can you remember the diſhes?"

Orlando could with difficulty help ſmiling at the pains Mrs. Rayland took to feed her diſquiet, by obtaining minute particulars of the man whoſe oſtentatious diſplay

of

of wealth ſo continually offended her. He aſſured her, however, that he was, in regard to the variety or ornaments of a table, ſo little of an adept, that, though he knew there was both turtle and veniſon, he could not tell the name of any other diſh. "But I believe, Madam," ſaid he, "there was almoſt every thing that at this time of the year comes to table, dreſſed every way that could be imagined."

"Kickſhaws, and French frippery, ſpoiling wholeſome diſhes. If I had my health," cried Mrs. Rayland as if animated anew with a truly Britiſh ſpirit—"if I had my health, I would aſk the favour of General Tracy to dine at Rayland Hall. Indeed I would requeſt his company to the tenants feaſt at my own table, and ſhew him, if he is too young a man to remember it, what an old Engliſh table was, when we were too wiſe to run after foreign gewgaws, and were content with the beſt of every thing dreſſed in the Engliſh faſhion by Engliſh people."

Orlando had a thouſand reaſons to promote a plan as unexpected as it was deſirable. Beſides the hope he had that the converſation of the General might reconcile Mrs. Rayland to a plan for his independence, and engage her to contribute to its being advantageouſly carried into execution, he was amuſed with the idea of ſeeing together two ſuch originals as Mrs. Rayland and General Tracy; and he knew, that as the latter was a *man of family*, and ſo very polite, he ſhould not riſk their mutually diſliking each other by bringing them together; or at leaſt that, if ſuch a circumſtance ſhould happen, thoſe manners, which both piqued themſelves on poſſeſſing, would prevent their ſhewing it.—For theſe, and for many other reaſons, he eagerly ſeized on the hint Mrs. Rayland had dropped. "Dear Madam," cried he, "I heartily hope you *will* be well enough. The General would be greatly flattered by ſuch a diſtinction! I know that nothing

would oblige him ſo much. When is the tenants' feaſt to be? I wiſh, if it is fixed, you would permit me to be your meſſenger to-morrow, and to carry him an invitation."

"Truly, child," replied Mrs. Rayland, whoſe anger ſeemed to be quite evaporated, "I am ſo out of the uſe of having company, that I don't know well what to ſay to it. I find my people have fixed the tenants' feaſt for Thurſday next, that is, this day week; and if I were ſure of being quite well——Lennard, what do you think of the matter?"

Lennard, who loved nothing better than great dinners, in which ſhe was of ſo much conſequence, anſwered, "Why, indeed, Ma'am, I think you'll be quite well enough—nay, I could venture to ſay ſo poſitively. Your foot is getting better apace; and in other reſpects, when you have been free from pain for a while, I have not known you better theſe many years."

"Well, Orlando, then," reſumed the old lady, "we'll conſider of it, and let you know to-morrow.—You have taken to your bed below again, I find?"

"I have, Madam, with your permiſſion."

"Well, then, you may come and breakfaſt with me; and for to-night, order what you pleaſe for your ſupper in your own room."

Orlando, rejoiced to be thus reconciled, now wiſhed her a good night, and retired; caſting, as he went, a melancholy glance toward Monimia, who, quite unnoticed by either of the ladies, had ſtood the whole time with her eyes fixed on the fire, and her beautiful arms expoſed to its ſcorching heat, while ſhe was employed in watching the important preparation that was boiling. But Monimia herſelf, far from feeling her ſituation, would have undergone infinitely more inconvenience, for as many hours as ſhe now had done minutes, to have enjoyed the ſatisfaction of hearing Orlando's voice,

even when his words were not addreſſed to her, and of obſerving the favour he was in with Mrs. Rayland; whoſe anger, however ſhe ſeemed deſirous of cheriſhing it, was put to flight on the firſt apology of her young favourite.

CHAP. VI.

THE meeting of the evening promiſed to be undiſturbed. It was long ſince Orlando had ſeen his Monimia quietly ſeated by the fire in the Study; and now that he was once more to enjoy that happineſs, he could not determine to embitter it by ſpeaking of the probability there was that he was ſoon to leave her, and enter on a new mode of life. He could, when they were actually together, the leſs reſolve to ſpeak of this, as Monimia appeared in unuſual ſpirits; and from what ſhe had obſerved of Mrs. Rayland's behaviour to him, in the interview at which ſhe had been preſent, ſhe found reaſon for forming more ſanguine hopes than ſhe had ever yet indulged, that their delicious viſions

viſions were not chimerical; and that Orlando, if not maſter of Rayland Hall, would yet be amply provided for by the favour of its preſent poſſeſſor.

Inſtead, therefore, of deſtroying theſe flattering viſions, which lent to the lovely features of Monimia the moſt cheerful animation, he endeavoured to diveſt his own mind of the painful reflections it had of late entertained; and inſtead of talking of what *was* to happen, he wiſhed to fortify the mind of Monimia againſt whatever *might* happen, by giving her a taſte for reading, and cultivating her excellent underſtanding. The books he had given her, the extracts ſhe had made from them, and her remarks, afforded them converſation, and gave to Orlando exquiſite delight. He had animated the lovely ſtatue, and, like another Prometheus, ſeemed to have drawn his fire from heaven. The ignorance and the prejudices in which Monimia had been brought up, now gave way to ſuch inſtruction as ſhe derived from Addiſon and other

celebrated moraliſts. She underſtood, and had peculiar pleaſure in reading, the poets, which Orlando had ſelected for her; and when ſhe repeated, in a faſcinating voice, ſome of the paſſages ſhe particularly admired, Orlando was inſpired with the moſt ardent wiſh to become a poet himſelf.

Very different was the way in which his elder brother paſſed this evening. Tormented with fear and remorſe, that unfortunate young man had returned to his long-deſerted home, for no other reaſon than becauſe he had, during his northern expedition, loſt to his companions every guinea that he could by any means raiſe, and had beſides contracted with them a very conſiderable debt of honour. He knew not how to apply to his father, whom he had already impoveriſhed; yet his pride would not let him return to Mr. Stockton's, whither ſome of the party were again gone, till he had the means of ſatisfying their demands againſt him. In this emergency he came home, in hopes of finding ſome pretence to procure

the

the money of his mother, whom he believed he could perſuade to borrow it for him of her brother Mr. Woodford, as ſhe had done a leſs conſiderable ſum once before; or at all events to gain a few days, in which he might conſider what to do.

It was to the dejection he felt on the awkward circumſtances to which he had reduced himſelf, that the gravity and ſteadineſs of manner was owing, which his father took for contrition and reformation. It laſted, however, no longer than till the next evening, when, after tea, Mrs. Somerive as uſual, in order to amuſe the General, propoſed cards—Mr. Somerive, however, having a perſon with him upon buſineſs from whom he could not diſengage himſelf, and Orlando having returned to Rayland Hall immediately after dinner, there was not enough to make a whiſt table (as none of the young ladies played), and therefore young Somerive propoſed to the General to ſit down to piquet.

To this propoſal he of courſe conſented, and, either from chance or deſign, the General loſt every party, and had preſently paid to his antagoniſt twelve guineas. Animated by this ſucceſs, eſpecially as it was againſt a man who was known to be in habits of playing at the firſt clubs, Philip Somerive again propoſed playing after ſupper. Fortune continued to be propitious; and when his father, mother and ſiſters retired, at a later hour than ordinary, he ſtill continued at the table, where he was now a winner of about fifty guineas.

They were no ſooner out of his way, than the true ſpirit of gaming, which their preſence had checked, broke out.

"This is poor piddling work, General!" exclaimed he: "Do you not think hazard a better thing?"

The General anſwered coolly, that it certainly was; "but," added he, "I ſuppoſe my good hoſt would think his houſe polluted by having the neceſſary inſtruments in it.

it. He has no other dice, I dare ſwear, than thoſe in the back-gammon table."

"Oh! as to that," anſwered young Somerive, "I am always provided with an apparatus in caſe of emergency—there is no travelling without ſuch a reſource—I have the pretty creatures up ſtairs. What ſay you, General—ſhall we waſte an hour with them?"

"With all my heart," replied Tracy. "Let us ſee if you are as much befriended by chance, as you have been by ſkill."

Young Somerive now produced from his travelling portmanteau a box and dice: he put a green cloth over the table, that the rattling of them might not be heard in the houſe; and then telling the ſervants that none need ſit up but the General's ſervant, they began to play, and continued at it till morning broke, with various ſucceſs—But on quitting it, Somerive found himſelf a very conſiderable gainer, and retired to his bed fluſhed with the hope that the General, all veteran as he appeared, and calmly as he

played, was a pigeon, from whoſe wings he might pluck the feathers which were wanting to repair his own.

The General, who only wanted a ſtudy of his character, and to whom hundreds were as nothing when he had any favourite project in view, was now perfectly aſſured that, by loſing money to him, or by ſupplying him with it when he loſt it to others, this young man would become wholly ſubſervient to his wiſhes, however contrary to honour or conſcience. He did not diſlike play, though he never regularly purſued it; and had one of thoſe cool heads in ſuch matters, which had prevented his ever ſuffering by it. He had generally been a winner, and particularly in betting:—he frequented, when he was in London, all the houſes where high play is carried on; and was ſo much accuſtomed to ſee thouſands paid and received at theſe places as matters of courſe, that he held the trifle he had paid to Philip Somerive the evening before as not worth remembering. It was

therefore

therefore with ſome ſurpriſe that he heard Mr. Somerive, who had called him apart the next morning, expreſs, in very forcible terms, his great concern that his ſon had won ſo large a ſum of him. If the General felt any concern, it was that Philip ſhould have been unguarded enough to ſpeak of it. He ſoon, however, learned that Mr. Somerive alluded ſolely to the fifty guineas he had won at piquet, and that of the ſubſequent tranſactions of the evening he knew nothing. This therefore he carefully concealed, and, aſſuring Mr. Somerive that he had almoſt forgot they played at all, conjured him not to be uneaſy about it.

"I know, my dear General," ſaid Somerive, "I know perfectly well that this is a mere trifle to you; but to my ſon it may, nay it will have the worſt conſequence. He is, I ſee with an aching heart, too much devoted to play—Succeſs only nouriſhes this ruinous paſſion—and diſtreſſed

as I have been, and indeed am, by his conduct, I ſhould rather have paid an hundred pounds for him than have ſeen him win fifty."

The General endeavoured to quiet, on this head, the apprehenſions of the unhappy father, by telling him that he ſaw nothing in the young man that was not at his age, and with his proſpects, very excuſable. "It is ſurely," ſaid he, "hazardous, my good friend, to check your ſon too much. If home is rendered utterly unpleaſant to him, his volatility ſeeks reſource abroad; and there you know how many deſigning people beſet a young man of his expectations."

"Good God!" exclaimed Somerive, "*what are* his expectations? He has impreſſed you, I ſee, my dear Sir, with the ſame idea which has in fact undone him, and will undo us all. What expectations has he that can in the leaſt be relied upon, unleſs it be of this ſmall eſtate, which he is already

already diſmembering, and which will ſoon diſappear—ah! very ſoon indeed, in the hands of a gameſter."

"Tie it up, then," ſaid the General.

"I cannot," anſwered Somerive; "for it is entailed, and, except my wife's jointure of an hundred a year, which with difficulty I contrived to ſettle upon her, he may diſſipate it all, and I have no doubt but he will."

"You judge, I think, too hardly of him. Something is ſurely to be forgiven him, who has always been told that he muſt be heir to the great property of the Raylands, and poſſeſs one of the largeſt landed eſtates in the county."

"O! would to heaven he never had been told ſo!" ſaid Mr. Somerive with a deep ſigh. "If ever, my dear General, he ſhould talk to you about it, pray endeavour to wean him from expectations ſo ruinous, and, I think, ſo fallacious. It is true that I am heir at law to all the eſtates of Sir Orlando Rayland my grandfather, in default of Sir Hildebrand's

Hildebrand's daughters having iſſue, but not if the ſurvivor of them diſpoſes of it by will, for the whole is hers without any reſtriction; and there is not the leaſt chance of her dying *without* a will, for I know ſhe is *never* without one: and the people who ſurround her take eſpecial care that her own family ſhall be excluded from it."

"You do not then ſuppoſe," ſaid the General, "you do not believe it poſſible that theſe people, by whom I conclude you mean thoſe old ſervants of whom I have heard you ſpeak, have intereſt enough with her to ſecure to themſelves ſo large a property as Mrs. Rayland poſſeſſes. I ſhould think it more likely that, though ſhe will probably give them conſiderable legacies, ſhe will leave the eſtate to the next heir; her pride will urge her to this, perhaps, on the condition of his taking the name of Rayland."

"I fear, not," anſwered Mr. Somerive. "She has a very ſingular temper, and has always been taught that the ſiſter of *her* father

father Sir Hildebrand diſgraced herſelf by marrying my father. She has on a thouſand occaſions given me to underſtand, that the ſmall portion of the Rayland blood which I have the honour to boaſt, is much debaſed by having mingled with that of a plebeian; and that the blood of my children being ſtill a degree farther removed from the Raylands, ſhe cannot conſider them as belonging to the family, which is in her opinion extinct—She means therefore to perpetuate its remembrance by the only method in which ſhe believes ſhe can do it worthily; and, after giving her ſervants conſiderable legacies——perhaps ſomething to Orlando—to have recourſe to the common refuge of poſthumous pride, and, with her large landed eſtates, to endow an hoſpital, which ſhall be called after her name."

The General exclaimed loudly againſt ſuch a method of ſettling her property; but, after hearing on what Mr. Somerive

founded

founded his opinion, he agreed that it ſeemed but too probable. "And yet," added he, "it appears to be more the intereſt of theſe ſervants, by whom you ſay ſhe is governed, that the eſtate ſhould deſcend to an individual—particularly that of the old houſekeeper, who, from what I can make out of the ſcraps I have picked up here and there about this Monimia, ſeems to have a plan of drawing in your youngeſt ſon to marry her; and of courſe it muſt be her wiſh, that *he* ſhould be Mrs. Rayland's heir."

"I have not diſcovered," replied Somerive, "in all I have collected from Orlando, that the aunt is at all privy to their attachment. But that indeed may be her art—She poſſeſſes more than almoſt any woman I ever knew; and had ſhe much leſs, ſhe muſt know that the bare ſuſpicion of ſuch an intrigue, on the part of Mrs. Rayland, would occaſion the diſgrace of Orlando—the expulſion of the girl from the houſe—

houſe—and perhaps the ruin of herſelf, if the leaſt idea occurred of her being of their counſel."

"Upon the whole, then, my friend," cried the General, "I think that the putting Orlando into ſome profeſſion immediately ſeems the only prudent meaſure you can take. This will probably aſcertain Mrs. Rayland's intentions, if they are in his favour; and, if they are not, will remove him from a ſituation which appears in my mind a thouſand times more likely to ruin him for life, than even thoſe imprudences of which you complain in his brother: for be aſſured, my dear Sir, a young fellow is never ſo completely ruined as when he has married fooliſhly—Every other folly is retrievable; but an engagement of that ſort blaſts a man's fortune for ever: and the wiſeſt thing he can do afterwards is to hang himſelf."

Though Mr. Somerive, who was not a "man of the world," and who had experienced many years of happineſs with a woman

woman whom he married for love, was by no means of Tracy's opinion as to marriages of affection in general, he ſaw the variety of evils ſuch a marriage would bring on Orlando, in as ſtrong a light as his friend could repreſent them. He therefore entirely acquieſced in the neceſſity of his being removed from Rayland Hall; and waited with impatience for Orlando's account of what had paſſed in that conference which he had undertaken to hold with the old lady, on the ſubject of his entering the army.

Juſt as he parted from General Tracy, who about an hour and a half before dinner retired to his toilet, Orlando appeared on horſeback. His father met him; and bidding him join him in the garden as ſoon as he had put his horſe in the ſtable, he walked thither—Orlando in a moment attended him. "Well," ſaid Mr. Somerive gravely, "have you had an opportunity of converſing with Mrs. Rayland on this matter? I have it every hour more at heart, and am determined that you ſhall be removed

removed from your preſent ſituation, unleſs, what is not to be expected, ſhe ſignifies her poſitive reſolution to make you very ample amends for your loſs of time, and gives me aſſurances of it."

Orlando, in this peremptory determination of his father, fancied he ſaw the machinations of his brother to get him away from the Hall; but, without expreſſing any part of the pain ſuch a ſuſpicion gave him, he anſwered, "You know, my dear Sir, that in our laſt conference on this ſubject, I aſſured you of what I now deſire to repeat, that I live only to obey you: but I have had no opportunity of ſpeaking to Mrs. Rayland on this ſubject; for, when I ſaw her on the firſt evening of my return to the Hall, it was with great difficulty I could appeaſe the anger ſhe felt at our having dined with Stockton."

"She knew it then?"

"Oh, yes!——Lennard and Pattenſon take care ſhe ſhall know every thing.

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At length, however, I had the good fortune, not only to obtain a remiſſion of my offence, but to engage her to invite our family and the General to dine at her table on Thurſday, when the tenants' feaſt is to be held at the Hall. Mrs. Rayland piques herſelf on ſhewing the General, whom ſhe reſpects as a man of family, a ſpecimen of old Engliſh hoſpitality, in oppoſition to the modern profuſion of the Caſtle—and her deſire to obtain his ſuffrage in favour of the ancient mode of living at Rayland Hall, has performed what no other conſideration would have effected. This unexpected project entered her head the moment I had deſcribed our viſit; and all yeſterday was paſſed in conſidering about it, and debating with Lennard whether ſhe ſhould be well enough. To-day it is decided that ſhe ſhall, and I am ſent with the invitation, which certainly you and my mother and ſiſters will accept; and I ſuppoſe General Tracy will oblige us by going alſo."

"Of

"Of that there can be no doubt," replied Mr. Somerive.

"I thought, therefore," added Orlando, "that you and the General might have an opportunity, during the courſe of the day, of introducing the converſation relative to my entering the army; and that it would be perhaps better than my abruptly diſcloſing what may, in ſome of her humours, appear to Mrs. Rayland as a deſire on my part to quit her."

"You have certainly given my ancient couſin love powder, Orlando," ſaid Mr. Somerive ſmiling; "for I never heard that, even in her younger days, ſhe ſhewed for any body as much affection as ſhe lately has done to you."

"And yet," replied Orlando, "I am almoſt certain that it goes no farther than a little preſent kindneſs, or perhaps a ſmall legacy."

Mr. Somerive, feeling that this was too probable, and was indeed what he had juſt before

before been repeating to General Tracy, ſighed deeply—and bidding Orlando go with his meſſage of invitation to his mother and ſiſters, he ſent up the card to the General; and then went on his uſual circuit round his farm, deſiring Orlando to ſtay dinner.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

ORLANDO returned to Rayland Hall in the evening, carrying with him the moſt polite anſwer from General Tracy; and, from his own family, aſſurances of the grateful pleaſure with which they accepted Mrs. Rayland's invitation for the following Thurſday. Poor Monimia too, though ſhe was to have no other part in this feſtivity than to aſſiſt her aunt in preparing for it, heard with ſatisfaction from Orlando that it was fixed, becauſe ſhe believed that this unuſual civility towards his family and their gueſt was an indubitable mark of Mrs. Rayland's increaſing affection for him.

Orlando, however, who from his father's laſt converſation, and from his perſuaſion that Mrs. Rayland would not oppoſe it, ſaw that his departure was certain, and would ſoon happen, thought it cruel to encou-

rage

rage the flattering impreſſions which the ſoft heart of Monimia ſo readily received, and which he had himſelf taught her to cheriſh when they were apparently much leſs likely to be realiſed. He therefore, when they met this evening, renewed, what he had ſometimes diſtantly touched upon before, the probability that he muſt ſoon enter the army, and quit, at leaſt for a time, the ſpot which, while ſhe remained on it, contained all that gave value to his life. The tender, timid Monimia, in whoſe idea every kind of danger was attendant on the name of ſoldier, was thunderſtruck with this intelligence: and it was not till Orlando had tried every argument to ſooth and conſole her, that ſhe was able to ſhed tears. "Could we hope, my Monimia," ſaid he, when he found her compoſed enough to liſten to him—"could we hope to continue as we are, and to converſe thus undiſcovered for years to come, tell me if there is not too much bitter mingled with the few tranſient moments of happineſs, to

make us reaſonably *wiſh* to continue it? When we meet, is it not always in fear and apprehenſion? and are we not ever liable to the ſame alarm as that from which you ſuffered ſo cruelly three weeks ſince?—Alas! even now we are in the power of an unprincipled ruffian, who, though he appeared willing to engage for mutual ſecrecy, may, in a fit of drunkenneſs, betray us; or, through mere inſolence, tell—becauſe he has the power of telling. He did not ſee you; but he knows, and indeed ſo does Pattenſon, that ſomebody was with me; and the very jealouſy that miſleads the old rogue Pattenſon, will perhaps make him watch and diſcover us. I need not, Monimia, deſcribe all I ſhould ſuffer for you if that were to happen; nothing would remain for us but to fly together: and ſurely I need not add, that if I did not fear to expoſe you, my angel, to the miſeries of poverty, I would, without hazarding a diſcovery, fly to-morrow; but I am, you know, under age, and we could not

marry in England. If I was thus to diſoblige my father, he would abandon me for ever, and from Mrs. Rayland I could expect nothing. Such is the melancholy train of thought I have been compelled to admit in reflecting on our preſent ſituation. Perhaps the line of life that is propoſed for me is the only one that we can with hope look forward to for the future." —He pauſed a moment: Monimia ſtifled the ſobs that convulſed her boſom; ſhe could not ſpeak, but ſat with her handkerchief to her eyes, and her head reſting on her hand, while he proceeded—"It is certain that I muſt tear myſelf from you; that I muſt enter on a new ſcene of life, and perhaps encounter ſome difficulties and hardſhips; but would you not deſpiſe a man of my age, who would not ſo purchaſe independence? If I have a profeſſion, I ſhall have ſomething on which to depend, if Mrs. Rayland will not, and my father cannot provide for me; ſomething on which, if I have tolerable fortune, I may

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in a few years be enabled to ſupport my Monimia. Can I, ought I with ſuch hopes to heſitate?"

"I allow," replied Monimia with a deep ſigh—"I allow that you ought not."

"While General Tracy lives," reſumed Orlando, "he will be my friend; at leaſt ſuch are his promiſes to my father. He aſſures him that he will make a point of my ſpeedy promotion; and his intereſt is certainly ſuch as leaves no doubt of his having the power to do it."

"Ah, Orlando!" ſaid Monimia in a low and broken voice, "you ſpeak only of the good, and forget or conceal the evil. What if you are maimed, or killed? What then becomes of Monimia, who could not die too, but muſt live perhaps the moſt deſolate and miſerable creature upon earth?"

"General Tracy," replied Orlando, "has aſſured my father, that the regiment in which he means to procure me a commiſſion, and for which they are now recruiting, is about to be immediately re-

called from America, where the war muſt very ſoon terminate in favour of England, and that therefore I ſhall certainly not be ſent abroad: he even ſays, that as ſoon as I have my commiſſion, it is highly probable that I ſhall be ordered into this country on a recruiting party, and may take up my quarters for two or three months in this neighbourhood."

Theſe reaſonable arguments, joined to the flattering hope that Orlando might, though entered on a profeſſion by which he would, ſhe believed, become independent, ſtill remain in England, and even be occaſionally in his native county, added to the conviction that they could not long continue to ſee each other without being diſcovered, reconciled Monimia to the thoughts of his accepting the commiſſion offered to him by the General; and ſhe became more calm, and able to talk of it with ſome degree of compoſure. Orlando, on their parting for that time, beſought her to aſſure him that ſhe would make her-

ſelf eaſy, and learn to think of his deſtination rather as a matter of ſatisfaction than apprehenſion. Monimia promiſed all he deſired: but ſhe was no ſooner alone than her apprehenſions again returned, and the ſad poſſibilities that ſhe had before enumerated recurred in all their terrors to her imagination. To theſe many were added, of which ſhe dared not ſpeak to Orlando: the fears that he might forget her; and that when once entered on new ſcenes, and among all the beauty, elegance, and accompliſhments which ſhe read of in magazines and newſpapers, the humble Monimia would be remembered no longer. This ſeemed to her ſo probable, and was ſo diſtreſſing to her heart, that ſhe thought ſhe could better endure almoſt every other evil. Sleep refuſed to baniſh theſe cruel ideas from her mind; and the morning broke, and called her from her reſtleſs bed to her taſk of attending on her aunt in the houſe-keeper's room, before ſhe could find any comfort in any of her reflections, unleſs it was the

hope that Mrs. Rayland might oppoſe the ſcheme of ſending Orlando away, ſince Monimia perſuaded herſelf that ſhe every day became fonder of his company.

Monimia appeared before her aunt ſo pale, from want of ſleep, and from the acute uneaſineſs ſhe had undergone, that Mrs. Lennard, notwithſtanding her uſual inſenſibility, took notice of it.

"Hey-day, girl!" cried ſhe, "why what's the matter now? Why you look, I proteſt, as if you had been up all night! Pray what have you been about?"

"About, aunt!" ſaid Monimia, while a faint bluſh, excited by fear and conſciouſneſs, wavered a moment on her cheek—"I have been about nothing."

"That is what you generally are about, I think," replied Mrs. Lennard harſhly. "But I ſuppoſe you have been ſitting up after ſome nonſenſe or other—with your books or your writing. I ſhall put an end to Madam Betty's career, I promiſe you; I know ſhe lets you have candles, and gets

books

books for you out of the Study, though I have time after time forbidden her to do any ſuch thing."

Monimia, willing to let it be thought that Betty did do ſo, rather than excite any other ſuſpicion by denying it, only ſaid mildly—"I hope, dear aunt, there is no harm in my trying to improve myſelf, if I do not therefore neglect what you order me to do?"

"Improve yourſelf!—Yes, truly, a pretty improvement—Your chalky face and padded eyes are mighty improvements: and I'd be glad to know what good your reading does you, but to give you a hankering after what you've no right to expect? An improved lady will be above helping me, I ſuppoſe, very ſoon."

"When I *am*, my dear aunt," anſwered Monimia, "it will be time enough for you to forbid my reading; but, till then, pray don't be angry if I endeavour to obtain a little common inſtruction."

"Don't be impertinent," exclaimed Mrs.

Lennard; "don't be inſolent—for if you are, Miſs, this houſe is no place for you.—I ſee already the bleſſed effects of your reading—you fancy yourſelf a perſon of conſequence: but I ſhall take care to put an end to it; for, if Betty ſupplies you with candles, I'll diſcharge her."

"She has *not* indeed, my dear aunt," ſaid Monimia, whoſe generous mind could not bear that another ſhould ſuffer for her.

"She has not!—what has ſhe not?" enquired Mrs. Lennard.

"She has not lately ſupplied me with candles," replied Monimia.

"How is it, then," cried Mrs. Lennard, fixing on her a ſtern and enquiring eye, "that light is ſometimes, aye and very lately too, ſeen from your window, at hours when your own candle is taken away, and when you ought to be in bed?"

To this Monimia could anſwer nothing, but that it was true ſhe had now and then ſaved a piece of wax candle herſelf; but,

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in order to put an end to an enquiry which had already made her tremble with the moſt cruel apprehenſions, ſhe endeavoured leſs to account for what *had* happened, and which ſhe could not deny, than to appeaſe her aunt by very earneſt aſſurances that what offended her ſhould happen no more, and that, ſince ſhe ſo much diſliked her reading of a night, ſhe would never again practiſe it.

Mrs. Lennard ſeemed to be ſomewhat ſatisfied by theſe proteſtations—though, while Monimia was with many tears repeating them, her fierce eyes were fixed on the countenance of her trembling niece with a look of queſtioning doubt, which made Monimia ſhrink with dread—for it ſeemed to intimate that more was ſuſpected than was expreſſed.

At length, however, ſhe condeſcended to appear pacified; and ſummoning Betty and another of the maid-ſervants, ſhe gave them their employments in preparing for the next day's dinner: then ordering Monimia to take her ſhare, and the ſuperin-

tendence of the whole, ſhe returned to the parlour; and poor Monimia, glad to be relieved from her preſence, proceeded as cheerfully in her taſk as her melancholy reflections on what had paſſed with Orlando the preceding night, and her newly-awakened dread of her aunt's ſuſpicions, would allow her to do.

Mr. Somerive was much at a loſs to know how to act in regard to his eldeſt ſon: fondly flattering himſelf that this beloved ſon had ſeen the dangerous errors of his former conduct, he could not bear the idea of ſhewing any reſentment at what was paſſed, or that, by his being left out of the party going to Rayland Hall, he ſhould be conſidered as an exile from the favour of Mrs. Rayland; yet, to let him go without an invitation, he knew, would give offence, and he knew not how to ſet about obtaining one. Orlando, who paſſed a few moments with him in the courſe of the preceding Wedneſday, ſaw his father's uneaſineſs, becauſe he had felt ſomething of the ſame kind himſelf about his brother;

and

and he generouſly, though without making any merit of it, undertook to remove this ſource of vexation, by engaging Mrs. Rayland to invite him. This was an arduous taſk, as the old Lady had not ſeen him for more than two years, and during that time had heard only evil reports of his conduct. The offence he had given her by aſſociating with the Stockton ſet, and even joining in thoſe treſpaſſes of which ſhe believed ſhe had ſo much reaſon to complain, had embittered her mind againſt him, even more than his gaieties and extravagance:—yet Orlando, by aſſuring Mrs. Rayland that he was now ſenſible of his error, that he was come home with a reſolution to remain with his family, and that it would diſcourage him in the career of reformation if ſhe did not ſeem ready to forgive, and again conſider him as a part of it, ſo flattered her ſelf-conſequence, and ſoothed her reſentment, that ſhe agreed to receive Philip as one of her gueſts, and commiſſioned Orlando to carry an invitation

to his brother: nor could ſhe, with all her natural ſeverity of temper, and little ſenſibility to great or generous actions, help being affected by the noble diſintereſtedneſs of her young favourite, who thus laboured to reconcile to her a brother who would have been conſidered by moſt young men as a formidable rival in her favour, and have been aſſiduouſly kept at the diſtance to which he had thrown himſelf. This exalted goodneſs of heart ſhe put down immediately to the account of the Rayland blood; and in praiſing Orlando to Mrs. Lennard, to whom ſhe now often ſpoke of him with pleaſure, ſhe remarked, that he every day became more and more like the Rayland family—"What fine eyes the young man has!" cried ſhe; "and how they flaſhed fire when he was pleading for that ſad brother of his with ſo much earneſtneſs!—And then when I ſeemed willing to oblige him, what a fine countenance! I could almoſt have fancied it was my grandfather's picture walked out of its frame,

if

if it had not been for the difference of dreſs!"

Mrs. Lennard aſſented, and encouraged every favourable idea her Miſtreſs entertained of Orlando; but all this while a mine was proceeding againſt him, of which the ſucceſs would inevitably ruin all his hopes.

This originated in the jealouſy of Pattenſon, who, whatever favour he obtained by dint of preſents and money from his coquettiſh dulcinea, could never diveſt himſelf of his apprehenſions that Orlando was a ſucceſsful rival. This cruel fear had taken poſſeſſion of his mind long before the diſcovery of Jonas Wilkins; and notwithſtanding the girl's ſolemn proteſtations that ſhe was in her own bed at the time ſhe was accuſed of being with Orlando in his Study, and the offers of the woman who lived in the ſame room to confirm this by her *Bible oath*, Pattenſon could never be perſuaded but that it was Betty herſelf; becauſe, having not the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion of Monimia, who was,

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he knew, locked in by her aunt every night, he believed that it was impoſſible it could be any other perſon. Betty, in order to teaſe him, ſometimes affected to be conſcious that the accuſation was true, while ſhe perſiſted in denying it; and Orlando rather encouraged than repreſſed a notion that prevented any conjectures which might have glanced towards Monimia.

For three weeks, therefore, this uneaſy ſuſpicion had corroded the boſom of the amorous though venerable Mr. Pattenſon, who, greatly as he loved his eaſe, reſigned it to the gratification of his revenge; and who determined to detect Betty, and in doing ſo thought he ſhould have an opportunity of ruining Orlando with his Lady, and thus getting out of his way a rival who might one day be his Maſter; and whom he hated, not only on account of his love, but of his intereſt; for ſo highly had he been in favour with all the three ladies, that each had, in dying, given

given him a very conſiderable legacy, and recommended him to the ſurvivor; and he did not doubt but that, on the deceaſe of his preſent Miſtreſs, he ſhould find his property inferior to that of few gentlemen in the county.

The gradual increaſe, therefore, of the favour ſhewn to Orlando did not at all pleaſe him; but his attempts to injure him with Mrs. Rayland had never ſucceeded, and began to be diſpleaſing to her. Still, however, he knew that, if Orlando were detected of an intrigue with one of her women-ſervants, it was an offence which Mrs. Rayland would never pardon; and though this diſcovery would certainly occaſion the diſcharge of the fair Helen for whom he ſighed, Pattenſon knew that Orlando could not take her into his protection for want of money; while, being diſmiſſed without a character by the two inexorable veſtals, his Lady and her companion, the girl would be glad to make terms with him; and he was quite rich enough

enough to undertake to keep her in ſome of the neighbouring towns, till ſhe might be ſupplanted by ſome newer object.

Such were the ſpeculations of the politic Pattenſon; but, like many other politicians, he purſued, among the many crooked paths before him, that which led him from his purpoſe. Inſtead of watching Orlando, he ſet himſelf to watch Betty, who never went in even with a meſſage to him in his Study without Pattenſon following her; and on the night he engaged her to ſit up for him, the butler was concealed in a cloſet within the ſervants' hall, and heard all their converſation; and though what then paſſed tended directly to prove to Pattenſon that he was in an error, he perſuaded himſelf that they ſuſpected his concealment, and had agreed upon what they ſhould ſay to miſlead him.

Inſtead, therefore, of rejoicing to find his ſuſpicions were not confirmed, he was only irritated to find that his attempts to detect the ſuppoſed lovers were baffled; and

and he redoubled his vigilance in watching Betty, and engaged one of the footmen in the ſame office. This was the ſame man who had ſeen Orlando croſs the park one morning at a very early and unuſual hour, and who then taking him at a diſtance for a poacher, had purſued and ſtopped him; circumſtances which the fellow, who was the mere creature of Pattenſon, had afterwards related to him, with conjectures as to the reaſon of Orlando's appearance that had helped to raiſe higher thoſe ſuſpicions Pattenſon had before entertained.

That Mrs. Rayland had determined to have company at her own table, and particularly the family of Somerive, on the day of the tenants' feaſt, was a terrible vexation to Pattenſon—who, inſtead of preſiding like the maſter of the houſe in the hall, would now be only the butler at the ſide-board in the great dining-room; and to chagrin for the conſequence he thus loſt, was added the mortification of knowing that while he ſhould be buſied in attending

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on his Lady up ſtairs, Orlando, who on theſe occaſions, which happened twice a year, always mingled with the young farmers, would have all the *ladies* of the hall to himſelf.

It had been the cuſtom of the Hall, time immemorial, for the landlord, on receiving his Michaelmas rents, to give the moſt numerouſly-attended entertainment of the year, and to allow the tenants' ſons and daughters, their friends, and the ſervants of the family, to have a fiddle in the hall. The Mrs. Raylands, notwithſtanding the ſtate in which they had been educated, had been always, during their youth, led to the company by their father, and accompanied by Lady Rayland, and had each gone down one dance with ſome neighbouring gentleman who was invited on purpoſe, or with the chaplain of the family. Thoſe days, though long ſince paſt, with almoſt all the witneſſes of their feſtivity, were ſtill recollected by Mrs. Rayland with ſome degree of pleaſure; and as ſhe adhered

hered moſt ſcrupulouſly to old cuſtoms, however unlike her uſual mode of life, this ſort of ruſtic ball given to the tenants had always been kept up, except in thoſe two years that were marked by the death of two of the ladies. Mrs. Lennard and Mr. Pattenſon, who had long preſided at them, loved the gaiety of the ſcene, and the conſequence they had in it, as they were conſidered as the maſter and miſtreſs of the feaſt; for, though Mrs. Rayland once uſed to go down to honour it with her preſence for ten minutes, ſhe had now left off that cuſtom, from age and infirmity; and her ſervants, to whom it was attended with ſome trouble and loſs of time, had perſuaded her that ſhe was always ill after ſuch an exertion. It was, therefore, uſual with her to ſup on this anniverſary ſomewhat earlier than ordinary, and to go to her bed, diſmiſſing Lennard to her poſt of miſtreſs of the revel, with a ſtrict charge to her to watch aſſiduouſly againſt the intruſion of drunkenneſs or impropriety; to

ſee that all the gueſts withdrew in due ſeaſon, and quite ſober; and to ſettle every thing after their departure for the decorum and tranquillity of the next day.

Mrs. Lennard had in general adhered to theſe good rules, though ſhe thought herſelf at liberty a little to vary from them in the detail. Thus ſhe deemed it no breach of the regularity her Lady recommended, if ſhe acceded to the earneſt ſolicitations of a handſome young farmer, who, as ſhe was perſuaded, left the buxom damſel his partner, purely for the gratification of going down a dance with her; though it ſometimes happened that her intereſt in the renewal of a leaſe, or ſome building wanting on the farm, for which ſhe could effectually intercede, were more powerful motives than even the honour or the pleaſure thus obtained—notwithſtanding Mrs. Lennard's aſſertion, which was probably true, that ſhe had learned to dance of the dancing-maſter who taught the firſt Duke of Cumberland and *all* the Princeſſes, and

that

that ſhe was celebrated for her excellence in that accompliſhment, particularly her great agility in the rigadoon.

This rigadoon, like all early and pleaſing acquirements, was ſtill recollected with gratitude for the fame it had obtained for her; and notwithſtanding the lapſe of years, and ſome rheumatic complaints, ſhe could occaſionally introduce ſome of its original graces into her country-dance. It is true ſhe never performed above one or two at moſt; but what ſhe *did*, ſhe piqued herſelf upon executing with a degree of ſpirit, which made all the operators in cotillon ſteps, and allemands, "hide their diminiſhed" heels. But, now alas! a fall ſhe got a few months before, and the cruel and cowardly attack of the rheumatiſm on the limb while it was in a diſabled ſtate, had put an end to the exhibition of this rigadoon ſtep for ever. Yet, with the true ſpirit of perſeverance, Mrs. Lennard, though ſhe danced no more, loved to overlook the dancers, and, not having the ſame reaſons as Pat-

tenſon

tenſon had to diſlike the party propoſed, had with all her intereſt promoted it—feeling, probably, that the pleaſure ſhe reſigned in the country-dance "with her rigadoon ſtep," would be amply made up to her in her appearing no longer as only houſe-keeper and attendant, but in the capacity of a companion and friend to Mrs. Rayland; for, now her Lady was ſo infirm, ſhe was introduced in that character whatever company might be in the houſe. Far as ſhe was advanced in years, to adorn her perſon was her foible; and ſhe reflected with ſome pleaſure on the ſmart and well-fancied dreſs with which ſhe intended, on this important Thurſday, to aſtoniſh and outſhine the Somerive family. Of this vanity, however, poor Monimia was the victim; for, after many debates about what ſhe ſhould wear, Mrs. Lennard found ſomething to do to every article of her dreſs. Theſe alterations were entruſted to Monimia; and at night when Orlando ſought her, as uſual, in the hope that he might paſs an

hour with her in her own room, he found her not only indulged with candles, which had been the night before prohibited, but weeping over a taſk which ſhe doubted whether it would be poſſible for her to finiſh in the time aſſigned her, to her aunt's ſatiſfaction.

Orlando had a particular intereſt in her appearing to advantage the next day; for, though he knew ſhe would not be allowed, nor did he wiſh her to be ſeen among the gueſts, he had imagined a project to introduce her and his ſiſter Selina to each other while every other perſon was engaged. The more he reflected on this ſcheme, the more practicable it appeared, and the more it flattered his imagination. He, therefore, could not bear to think that, between fatigue and fretting, the beauty he had ſaid ſo much of to Selina ſhould not be ſeen in all its brilliancy. "You ſhall not," ſaid he, "Monimia, go with me to-night, but you ſhall go to bed; and if

thoſe

thoſe curſed things muſt be done, you may finiſh them in the morning."

"Ah, no!" replied Monimia, wiping away the tears, which on ſo ſlight an occaſion ſhe was aſhamed of letting him ſee—"no, Orlando, not ſo—I muſt neither paſs theſe next four or five hours with you, or in my bed; but muſt ſit up and finiſh this: for I am very ſure that, with the dawn of the morning, my aunt, without conſidering how little time ſhe has allowed me for this buſineſs, will ſummon me to that which muſt go forward in the houſe-keeper's room; and that, to-morrow, I ſhall have the jellies and ſyllabubs to make, to give out every thing to the cook, and to help in all the made diſhes: perhaps I ſhall never ſit down ten minutes from the time I get up till dinner is ſent in; and therefore what I have to do of this ſort, muſt be done to-night."

"Curſe on the ridiculous, oſtentatious old woman!" exclaimed Orlando. "I cannot

not bear to think of your being ſo fatigued!"

"Do not," ſaid Monimia with an angelic ſmile—"do not let us, my dear friend, be rendered uneaſy by trifles, when it is but too probable that we ſhall have ſo many real ſorrows ſo ſoon to contend with. What is the loſs of a few hours reſt? and of how many hours have not I voluntarily deprived myſelf! Beſides," added ſhe, ſeeing him gaze on her with a look of deep concern, "to finiſh the whole is not ſo great an effort as I fooliſhly, from low ſpirits, owing perhaps to thinking too much on the converſation of laſt night, at firſt repreſented it to myſelf. However, Orlando, inſtead of my going down to your room, I muſt ſit here."

"And I muſt not remain with you?" cried he.

"A little while you may," replied Monimia; "but ſpeak low—I ſhall not do my millinery the worſe for your ſitting by me, if you will but be calm and reaſonable."

They then began to conſult on the propoſed meeting of the next day. Monimia trembled as it was talked of; yet pleaſure was mingled with the apprehenſion with which ſhe thought of being made acquainted with any of his relations, particularly with his beloved Selina, whom he repreſented as a ſecond ſelf. It was ſettled, after ſome little debate on the ſubject, that when every part of the family were engaged in the hall, Monimia ſhould, at an hour fixed upon, find her way in the dark to the Study; not through the chapel, but by the uſual way through the houſe; and that Selina ſhould be brought there by her brother immediately afterwards, where they might remain half an hour unſuſpected, and with much leſs hazard than in Monimia's room. This being arranged, Orlando entreated her to ſpare herſelf as much as poſſible; and having extorted a promiſe from her, that when ſhe found herſelf fatigued ſhe would endeavour to ſleep, he reluctantly left her.

CHAP. VIII.

MONIMIA, ſecure of the tendereſt affection of her lover, bore, without more repining, the little hardſhips to which her ſituation expoſed her:—but her mind looked forward, in mournful anticipation, to the time when ſhe ſhould no longer hear that ſoothing voice lending her courage againſt every tranſient evil; no longer receive continual aſſurances of the ardour and generoſity of his attachment; and find in his diſintereſted love, his attentive friendſhip, ſufficient conſolation againſt her uncertain or uneaſy deſtiny.

To obey him, was the firſt wiſh of her life; ſhe therefore endeavoured to drive from her mind the melancholy reflections

that prevented her repoſe, and put off the finiſhing her taſk till the next day. As ſoon as it glimmered through her caſement, ſhe aroſe to her taſk; which having ſoon finiſhed, ſhe awaited with a lightened heart the other orders of her aunt.

The whole houſe was in a buſtle—and Mrs. Rayland not only in unuſual health, but as anxious for the ſplendour and excellence of her entertainment, as if ſhe had a deeper deſign than merely to outſhine the newer elegancies of Carloraine Caſtle. All the operations of Mrs. Lennard and her attendants ſucceeded happily. By half after two all the gueſts were aſſembled: by half after three all the tables groaned under the weight of veniſon and beef. About ſeventy people were aſſembled in the hall. In the dining-parlour the party conſiſted of General Tracy, who was placed at Mrs. Lennard's right hand; on her left Mrs. Hollybourn, the wife of the archdeacon of that diſtrict, a lady of a moſt preciſe, and indeed formidable demeanour: oppoſite to her,

her, and next to Mrs. Somerive, ſat the Doctor himſelf, a dignified clergyman, of profound erudition, very ſevere morals, and very formal manners; who was the moſt orthodox of men, never ſpoke but in ſentences equally learned and indiſputable, and held almoſt all the reſt of the world in as low eſtimation as he conſidered highly his own family, and above all himſelf.

Between her mother and Mr. Somerive, on the other ſide, was placed their only daughter and heireſs, Miſs Ann-Jane-Eliza Hollybourn, who, equally reſembling her father and her mother, was the pride and delight of both: poſſeſſing ſomething of each of their perſonal perfections, ſhe was conſidered by them a model of lovelineſs; and her mind was adorned with all that money could purchaſe. The wainſcot complexion of her Mamma was ſet off by the yellow eyebrows and hair of the Doctor. His little pug noſe, diveſted of its mulberry hue, which, on the countenance

of his daughter, was pronounced to be *le petit nez retrouſſé*, united with the thin lips drawn up to make a little mouth, which were peculiar to "his better half," as he facetiouſly called his wife. The worthy archdeacon's ſhort legs detracted leſs from the height of his amiable daughter, as ſhe had the long waiſt of her mother, fine ſugar-loaf ſhoulders that were pronounced to be *extremely genteel*, and a head which looked as if the back of it had by ſome accident been flattened, ſince it formed a perpendicular line with her back. To dignify with mental acquirements this epitome of human lovelineſs, all that education could do had been laviſhed; maſters for drawing, painting, muſic, French, and dancing, had been aſſembled around her as ſoon as ſhe could ſpeak; ſhe learned Latin from her father at a very early period, and could read any eaſy ſentence in Greek; was learned in aſtronomy, knew ſomething of the mathematics, and, in relief of theſe more abſtruſe ſtudies, read Italian

and

and Spaniſh. Having never heard any thing but her own praiſes, ſhe really believed herſelf a miracle of knowledge and accompliſhments; and it muſt be owned, that an audience leſs partial than thoſe before whom ſhe generally performed, might have allowed that ſhe performed very long concertos, and ſolos without end, with infinite correctneſs, and much execution. Then ſhe made moſt inveterate likeneſſes of many of her acquaintance; and painted landſcapes, where very green trees were reflected in very blue water. Her French was moſt grammatically correct, though the accent was ſomewhat defective; and ſhe knew all manner of hiſtory—could tell the dates of the moſt execrable actions of the moſt execrable of human beings—and never had occaſion to conſult, ſo happy was her memory, Truſler's Chronology. As it was believed, ſo it was aſſerted by the Doctor and his wife, that their daughter was the moſt accompliſhed woman of her age and country; and by moſt of their ac-

quaintance it was taken for granted. The gentlemen, however, whom all theſe elegancies were probably deſigned to attract, ſeemed by no means ſtruck with them: ſome of them, who had approached her on the ſuggeſtion of her being an heireſs, had declared that her fortune made no amends for her want of beauty; and others had been alarmed by the acquiſitions which went ſo much beyond thoſe they had made themſelves. Thus, at ſix-and-twenty (though the lady and her parents, for ſome reaſons of their own, called her no more than twenty-two), Miſs Hollybourn was yet unmarried! for, of thoſe lovers who had offered, ſome had been rejected by the Doctor, and ſome by herſelf. She affected a great indifference, and talked of the pleaſures of purſuing knowledge in an elegant retirement. But it was obſerved, that whenever any young men of preſent fortune, or of future expectation, were in the country, Dr. Hollybourn's family returned the viſits of the ladies to whom

theſe

theſe gentlemen belonged, with unuſual punctuality.

While they were in this part of the world, they always dined once or twice at Rayland Hall, where the Doctor was well-received as a moſt pious worthy man, his Lady a very good kind of woman, and Miſs as a mighty pretty ſort of a young perſon. Of late the whole family had riſen into higher favour; for the Doctor was the only clergyman in the country around who had reſiſted the good entertainment ſo profuſely given at Carloraine Caſtle, and had refuſed to viſit a man who kept a miſtreſs. He had even gone farther, and preached a ſermon which all his congregation ſaid pointed immediately at Mr. Stockton; but as Mr. Stockton did not hear it, and having heard it would not have cared for it, the reproof only edified his hearers, and raiſed the Doctor in the eſteem of the Lady of the Hall.

The lower part of the table was filled by the four Miſs Somerives and their two

brothers; Orlando, at the requeſt of Mrs. Rayland, taking his ſeat at the bottom.

The plenty and excellence of the table, which was furniſhed almoſt entirely from the park, farm, warren, gardens, and ponds of Rayland Hall, were highly commended by the gueſts, and by none with more zeal than the General and the Doctor, who vied with each other in applying that ſort of flattery of which their venerable hoſteſs was moſt ſuſceptible. The General ſpoke in terms of the higheſt reſpect of her ancient family, and of the figure made in hiſtory by the name of Rayland. The Doctor, while he did juſtice to the excellent diſhes before him, launched out in very ſincere praiſe of the domain which produced them: the beautiful park which, he averred, fed the very beſt veniſon in the country; the woods abounding in game; the extenſive ponds, whoſe living ſtreams contained all manner of fiſh; the rich meadows below, that fatted ſuch exquiſite beef; the fine ſheep walks on the downs above, which

ſent

ſent to table mutton that rivalled the Welch mutton itſelf!—then, ſuch gardens for fruit! ſuch convenient poultry yards!—— Mrs. Rayland, who loved to hear her place praiſed, could have liſtened to ſuch eulogiums for ever; and ſeemed totally to have forgotten that, according to the courſe of nature, ſhe ſhould be miſtreſs of theſe good things but a very little time longer, and that, when a little ſpace in the chancel of the adjoining church would be all ſhe could occupy, they muſt paſs into the poſſeſſion of another.

Who that other was to be, appeared an enquiry which the Doctor had much at heart. From ſome late circumſtances he had reaſon to ſuppoſe that Orlando would be the fortunate poſſeſſor of all the excellent accommodations which impreſſed him with ſo much veneration:—but he now ſaw the elder brother again received, and when he conſidered the advantages which primogeniture might give him in the mind of Mrs.

Rayland, he doubted to which of the Somerives it would be politic to pay court.

Some ideas were floating in his mind, that whichever of theſe young men became maſter of Rayland Hall, could not fail to be a very proper match for the moſt accompliſhed Miſs Hollybourn. It was certain that he had always reckoned upon a title for her; but ſuch a deficiency might eaſily be made up by the ſucceſſor to ſuch a fortune. What ſo eaſy as to change a name by the King's moſt gracious licenſe? and to renew the old title of Baronet, which had been ſo long in the family?—Sir Philip Rayland! Sir Orlando Rayland! either ſounded extremely well. Both were very well looking young men, and the youngeſt remarkably handſome. The more the Doctor conſidered this project, the more feaſible it appeared; and he now began to ſtudy the chances, which he thought he could do from Mrs. Rayland's behaviour.

A very

A very little obſervation determined him in favour of Orlando. He ſaw that Mrs. Rayland ſeemed to look upon him as her ſon, while towards his brother her manners were cold and ſtately. When dinner was over, the gentlemen, after a ſhort ſtay over their wine, followed the ladies to another apartment. General Tracy was, at the deſire of Mrs. Rayland, ſhewn into the gallery of portraits by Orlando—and the young ladies, at the requeſt of Miſs Hollybourn, who had never ſeen all the pictures in the houſe, were permitted by their mother to be of the party; while Philip Somerive, who went out under pretence of accompanying them, ſlipped away as ſoon as he left the drawing-room, and went after his own imagination.

It was now dark, and theſe portraits were to be ſhewn by candle-light to General Tracy, who cared not a ſtraw if the whole race of Raylands had been ſwept from the memory of mankind; though he had, partly by gueſs, and partly from recollection, been

been inceſſantly talking to Mrs. Rayland about the glory of her anceſtors. By this he perceived he had made a very unexpected progreſs in her favour; which he would by no means forfeit by ſhewing any indifference to her propoſal of viſiting the repreſentations of the eminent men in whoſe praiſe he had been ſo eloquent. But a much ſtronger inducement was his hope to find an opportunity of ſpeaking to Iſabella, while he pretended to contemplate with admiration the picture of her great grandfather.

But this hope was rendered abortive by the preſence of Miſs Hollybourn, who, leaning on Iſabella's arm, continued to queſtion Orlando as to the hiſtory of every portrait, and then made her remarks upon it—ſometimes addreſſing herſelf to the General, and ſometimes to Orlando, who were equally weary of her, and who would both have given the world for her abſence; for Orlando dreaded her detaining him beyond the time that he had fixed for the meeting

between

between his ſiſter Selina and Monimia; and the General deteſted her for being in the way when he fancied he could otherwiſe, by ſome means or other, have enjoyed that notice from Iſabella which he found it ſo very difficult to obtain in the houſe of Mr. Somerive; where, ſince he had ſpoke more plainly to her of his paſſion, ſhe had not only ſhunned him, but had aſſured him that ſhe would repeat his converſation to her father. Twice, therefore, he had been forced to apologize, and turn off his profeſſions as a joke, becauſe he could never find her long enough alone to allow of his uſing thoſe arguments that he thought muſt be ſucceſsful; and he had been eagerly ſolicitous to accept the invitation from Mrs. Rayland, becauſe he hoped that, in ſuch a great houſe, in a day of univerſal feſtivity, ſuch an opportunity would be found.

Miſs Hollybourn, having ſufficiently ſhewn her knowledge both in painting and hiſtory, and imagining her auditors were amazed and edified by both, requeſted to

know

know if the houſe did not furniſh many other portraits of remarkable perſons, or pictures by eminent hands. Orlando anſwered coldly, that there were ſome in other parts of the houſe, but none particularly worthy her attention. She deſired, however, he would have the goodneſs to ſhew her round that ſuit of rooms. It was the ſide of the houſe formerly ſet apart for company, but now was very rarely inhabited. The furniture was rich, but old faſhioned:—the beds were of cut velvet or damaſk, with high teſters, ſome of them with gilt cornices:—the chairs were worked, or of coloured velvets, fringed with ſilk and gold, and had gilt feet:—fine japanned cabinets, beautiful pieces of china, large glaſſes, and ſome valuable pictures, were to be ſeen in every room, which, though now ſo rarely inhabited, were kept in great order; and the oak floors were ſo nicely waxed, that to move upon them was more like ſkating than walking.

Miſs Hollybourn had ſomething to ſay

on every object ſhe beheld. One beſpoke the grandeur, another the taſte, a third the antiquity of the family who were owners of the manſion; but ſtill, among all this common-place declamation, it was eaſy to ſee that the moſt amiable moveable in it at preſent was, in her opinion, the handſome, intereſting Orlando.

General Tracy, accuſtomed to ſtudy the fair, perceived this immediately. He perceived too, that Orlando diſliked her as much as ſhe ſeemed charmed with him, and that therefore this rich heireſs would not be the means of preventing the plan they had in agitation from taking effect. He therefore ventured to ſay to him, when he had an opportunity as they deſcended the great ſtair-caſe—"You are a fortunate man, Sir!"

"Fortunate, Sir!" ſaid Orlando, who had nothing in his head but his intended meeting with Monimia—"How do you mean fortunate?"

"Nay," replied the General, "moſt young

young men would, I believe, think it fortunate to be ſo highly approved of by ſuch a young lady!"

"What lady, Sir?" cried Orlando, in increaſed alarm, and ſtill thinking of Monimia.

"Miſs Hollybourn," replied the General—"the accompliſhed Miſs Hollybourn."

"Miſs Hollybourn!" exclaimed Orlando with a contemptuous look; yet recollecting that he had no right to deſpiſe her, whether the General's conjecture was juſt or not, he added, "The approbation of *ſuch* a young lady is certainly what I neither deſire nor deſerve."

This paſſed as they waited on the ſtaircaſe, while Miſs Hollybourn explained to the two Miſs Somerives the Loves of Cupid and Pſyche, which were painted on the wall; though the picture was ſo little illuminated by the two wax-candles, carried by Orlando and a ſervant, that nothing but her paſſion to diſplay her univerſal knowledge,

ledge, could have induced her to attempt clearing up the obſcurity in which the wavering and unequal light involved a ſtory not very clearly told by the painter. At length the diſſertation finiſhed; and the whole party returned to the drawing-room, where they found the good Doctor had ſupported the converſation during their abſence. In about half an hour afterwards Mr. Pattenſon came in great form to announce that the tenants were aſſembled in the hall, and requeſted to know if their Lady was well enough to oblige them with her preſence during their firſt dance. This was the eſtabliſhed etiquette. Mrs. Rayland anſwered, that ſhe would be there; and then addreſſing herſelf to her company, ſhe ſaid, "That it had always been her cuſtom in the time of Sir Hildebrand, her father, to lead down, with her dear deceaſed ſiſters, the firſt dance at the tenants' feaſt; that the cuſtom had been long ſince laid aſide; but if any of the friends whom I have now the pleaſure of ſeeing aſſembled, will condeſcend

deſcend to go down a dance with the tenantry and domeſtics ——"

The General and the Doctor eagerly interrupted her——

"I am not a dancing man, Madam," cried the General: "I never was fond of dancing. How much I now, in looking at that beautiful group of young ladies, have cauſe to regret it! and much I ſhall envy the young men, who no doubt will take advantage of ſuch an opportunity."

"I, Madam," cried the Doctor, quitting his ſeat and waddling to her, "am neither by nature or profeſſion a dancing man; but, to ſhew you how much I honour ſo excellent a cuſtom, there is my ſubſtitute (pointing to his daughter), and I will venture to ſay that few men ever boaſted a better."

Mrs. Rayland, then looking round the room, ſaid, "Mr. Orlando Somerive, you will have the honour of beginning the dance with Miſs Hollybourn."

Orlando,

Orlando, who would have heard of an impending earthquake with as much pleaſure, heſitated, and ſaid, "My brother, Madam—my brother has a ſuperior claim to that happineſs."

"No, no, child!" cried Mrs. Rayland; "not at all—you are, *as it were*, at home here, and therefore I will have you begin. Beſides, I don't ſee your brother:—when he returns, he may take your eldeſt ſiſter; and the two youngeſt ladies may dance together, for I ſuppoſe you will all chooſe to dance."

Mrs. Somerive aſſented for her daughters, and ſaid, "Perhaps, Madam, Philip is already below."

"However that may be," replied Mrs. Rayland coldly, "it is quite time to begin; the people are, no doubt, impatient. Therefore, if you General Tracy, and you Dr. Hollybourn, and you Mr. Somerive, will have the kindneſs to ſee the ladies to the hall, my people will help me thither in a few moments."

The

The man of war, and the man of peace, now declared how happy they ſhould eſteem themſelves to be permitted the honour of being her attendants; but ſhe told them, only Pattenſon and Lennard had been uſed to it, and again deſired they would conduct the other ladies. The General, under the cruel neceſſity of offering his hand to Mrs. Somerive, or Mrs. Hollybourn, caſt a wiſtful look towards Iſabella, and took the hand of the latter on ſeeing Mrs. Somerive conducted by the Doctor; while Orlando, with a heavy heart, led Miſs Hollybourn, and his ſiſters followed. It was now within a quarter of an hour of the time that he had hoped to meet his Monimia; and he ſaw himſelf tied down to an engagement from which he feared there was little hope of eſcaping in time. Philip, to whom he moſt earneſtly wiſhed to transfer the little coveted honour deſigned him by his partner, appeared not; and poor Orlando ſtood awaiting his arrival at the head of the fifteen or ſixteen couple who were going to dance,

execrating

execrating his ill fortune, which ſeemed to have brought this odious heireſs on purpoſe to diſappoint him of the exquiſite pleaſure with which he had on this night fondly flattered himſelf—that of forming a laſting and tender friendſhip between the ſiſter he ſo fondly loved, and his adored Monimia.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

AT length Mrs. Rayland was ſeated at the upper end of the hall, near the fire—the General placed himſelf by her, and the Doctor ſtrutted round her—the other ladies were oppoſite; and the dance began.

Poor Orlando, whoſe heart beat not reſponſive to the muſic, made, however, an effort to conceal his vexation. His partner, who had learned for many years of the moſt celebrated maſter, exerted all her knowledge of the art, and diſplayed all her graces to attract him; while he, hardly conſcious of her exiſtence, proceeded mechanically in the dance; and ſo little penetration had the ſpectators, that his abſence, or diſtaſte to what he was about, was

wholly unperceived, while Mrs. Rayland could not help obſerving to the Doctor how well Orlando performed—"Is he not," ſaid ſhe, "a fine young man?"

"Indeed he is, Madam," replied the Doctor, who had now the opening he ſo long wiſhed for; "a very fine young man, I think;" and he became an inch higher as he ſpoke. "I think indeed that this iſland produces not a finer couple than *your* kinſman, Madam, and the *daughter* of your humble ſervant."

Mrs. Rayland, who loved not female beauty whether real or imaginary, did not ſo warmly aſſent to this as the Doctor expected; who, not diſcouraged, ſquatted himſelf down in the place the General had that moment vacated (who could not forbear walking Iſabella down the dance), and thus proceeded:

"I aſſure you, dear Madam, I have often ſpoken moſt highly in praiſe of your ſagacity and diſcernment in electing the young Orlando as your favourite and *protegé*.

tegé. He is a fine young man—good, prudent and ſenſible; and, I am ſure, grateful for your bounty. I dare ſay that he will do well; for, under your auſpices, there are few men even of conſideration and fortune, who, having daughters, would not be proud of an alliance with him."

Mrs. Rayland anſwered rather coldly, "I believe Mr. Orlando has no thoughts of marrying.—He is yet too young."

"He is young, to be ſure, Madam; but, for my own part, I muſt obſerve, that early marriages founded, as no doubt his would be, alike on prudence and inclination, generally turn out happily. As to my own girl, undone as I and Mrs. Hollybourn muſt to be ſure feel without her, I declare to you that, though ſhe is ſo young, I ſhould not heſitate to diſpoſe of her to a man of even her own age, if I were convinced that he was a prudent, ſober young man, unlike thoſe ſad examples of folly and extravagance that we ſee before our eyes every day; a young man who had had a virtuous education,

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which in my opinion is a private one; a young man of family and of good expectations—I ſay, Madam, that on ſuch a one, though his preſent fortune be unequal to Miſs Hollybourn's expectations, I ſhould not heſitate, young as ſhe is, and living as I do only by gazing on her, to beſtow her with twenty thouſand pounds down, and—I will ſay nothing of future expectations—I am, I bleſs the Father of all mercies, in a proſperous fortune—I have ſeventeen hundred a year in church preferment; my own property, which I have realiſed in land, is ſomewhat above twelve hundred. When I have given my girl her little marriage portion, I have ſtill ſomething handſome in the three per cents, and in India ſtock a trifle more. My brother-in-law, the biſhop, has no children, and my daughter will inherit the greateſt part of his fortune. So you ſee, Madam, that, to ſay nothing of her perſonal and mental accompliſhments, which to be ſure it ill becomes *a father* to inſiſt upon—I ſay, reckoning only her pe-

cuniary advantages, there are few better matches in England."

The Doctor, who knew that Mrs. Rayland loved money, imagined she could not fail of being attracted by this history of his wealth, nor misunderstand his meaning in giving it: but he had for once mistaken his ground. Mrs. Rayland, though she loved her own money, loved nobody the better for having or affecting to have as much. She knew that, rich as Doctor Hollybourn now was, he began his classical career as a servitor at Oxford; and that his "brother-in-law the bishop," from whose *nepotism* his wealth and consequence had been in a great measure derived, was the son of an innkeeper. Though she always spoke highly of his piety, and his high-church principles, she had ever contemned his efforts to make himself be considered as a man of family: nor did she feel much disposed to encourage any scheme to make Orlando independent of her by marriage, still less an attempt to extort from her a decision

deciſion concerning him; which, whatever her real ſentiments might be, ſhe was not of a temper to declare. For all theſe reaſons ſhe heard the converſation of Doctor Hollybourn very coldly, and only ſaid, "that to be ſure Miſs was a very accompliſhed young lady; and, having ſuch a fine fortune, might expect to marry in high life."

Still the Doctor was not repulſed; and, fancying that he had not yet ſpoken plain enough, he went on to enlarge on his notions of happineſs, and on his views for his daughter. High life, he ſaid, in the common acceptation of the word, was not his ambition. It was real domeſtic happineſs, and not unneceſſary and unmeaning ſplendour, he deſired for his dear girl—a good huſband untainted with the vices and falſe philoſophy of a diſſolute age—an handſome country reſidence, where ſhe might be received into an ancient and religious family—were rather his objects. "A title," added he, "a title has its advantages no

doubt, and eſpecially if it be an ancient title, one that brings to the mind the deeds of the glorious defenders of our country—men who have ſhed their honourable blood in defence of the Church of England, and their King—who bled in the cauſe for which Laud and his ſainted maſter died! When I hear ſuch names, and ſee their poſterity flouriſhing, I rejoice—When I learn that ſuch families, the honour of degenerate England, are likely to be extinct, my heart is grieved. And how ſhould I be thankful, how feel myſelf elevated, if *my* daughter, marrying into ſuch a family, ſhould reſtore it, while *my* intereſt might obtain a renewal in her poſterity of the fading honours of an illuſtrious race!"

This was ſpeaking at once pompouſly and plainly. But Mrs. Rayland was more offended by the air of conſequence aſſumed by the Doctor, than flattered by the fine things he ſaid of her family; and ſhe ſo little concealed her diſpleaſure, that Mrs. Somerive, long weary of the parading and

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ſupercilious converſation of Mrs. Hollybourn, and who ſaw, by the Doctor's frequently looking towards Orlando, that the diſcourſe was about him, and that Mrs. Rayland was diſpleaſed with it, aroſe and came towards them: ſhe ſaid ſomething to Mrs. Rayland merely with a view to break the diſcourſe, which was, however, immediately done much better by the General, who, afraid of being too particular, now left Iſabella; and returning to the ſeat Doctor Hollybourn had ſeized, he cried, "Come, come, my good Doctor, we ſoldiers are a little proud of our favour with the ladies, and we do not patiently ſee ourſelves diſplaced by you churchmen. I ſhall not relinquiſh my ſeat by my excellent hoſteſs."

The Doctor then got up; and fancying, from the ſoftneſs and ſweetneſs of Mrs. Somerive's manner, that he ſhould in her meet a willing auditor, and perhaps the very beſt he could find for a ſcheme which acquired every moment new charms in his

imagination, he aſked if he ſhould attend her to the other end of the room to look at the dancers; to which, as ſhe was extremely reſtleſs and uneaſy by the long abſence of her eldeſt ſon, whom ſhe every moment hoped to ſee enter, ſhe readily aſſented.

The General then took poſſeſſion of the poſt the Doctor had quitted; and being more uſed to every kind of approach, he made infinitely more progreſs with Mrs. Rayland, in obtaining her conſent to Orlando's entering the army, than the Doctor had effected for his ſcheme, notwithſtanding the ſplendour of his fortune, the accompliſhments of his daughter, or his mention of "his brother the biſhop."

In the mean time the poor young man, who was rendered by Mrs. Rayland's favour an object ſought for by the divine, and by his own ſpirit an object of dread to the ſoldier, was half diſtracted, and knew not what he was about. It was now paſt the hour when he had promiſed Monimia to bring Selina to her; for, not expecting

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the unwelcome addition of the Hollybourn family, he concluded that, after going down a dance with one of the buxom daughters of the principal tenant, he could have ſlipped away at the end of it; and whiſpering his mother that he was going to ſhew Selina ſome of his drawings, and how he had ornamented his little tapeſtry room, that he might account for her abſence, he ſhould have had an uninterrupted hour with his moſt beloved ſiſter and his Monimia.

Inſtead of this, he now found himſelf fixed for the whole night to Miſs Hollybourn; who had already declared that ſhe found herſelf in ſuch a humour for dancing, and that really the whole ſet was ſo much more tolerable than ſhe expected, that ſhe ſhould not very ſoon wiſh to ſit down. Poor Orlando, who had no excuſe to offer for quitting her, had no hope but in the arrival of his brother, to whom he flattered himſelf he might reſign this unenvied honour at leaſt for one dance: but even this hope

was very uncertain; for Philip might perhaps return no more to the room, or, if he did, might be unwilling to accept the felicity of dancing with Miſs Hollybourn, for he was not of a humour to put himſelf out of the way for any one; and, as he very ſeldom danced at all, would now, if he did join the dancers, much more probably ſelect for his partner one of the handſome daughters of the tenants, with whom he could be more at home.

Thus the time which Orlando expected to have paſſed in ſo different a manner wore away. In vain he looked towards the door—no brother arrived to ſuccour him. The ſecond dance was already at an end; and Iſabella, who had, with her mother's permiſſion, accepted the hand of a rich young farmer, while Selina and Emma danced together, had already called a third, and was flying down with a ſpirit and gaiety which quite enchanted her ancient lover; while Orlando, who on account of Miſs Hollybourn ſtill kept a place near

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the top, was preparing with an heavy heart to follow her, when his father, with an expreſſion of extreme concern on his countenance, approached, and aſked him if he knew where his brother was?

"No, Sir, indeed I do not," anſwered Orlando; "I cannot even gueſs—but, for God's ſake, give me leave to go look for him. I ſee you are very uneaſy at his abſence."

"I am indeed," replied Mr. Somerive, "and your mother much more ſo."

"Let me go, dear Sir, then," ſaid Orlando eagerly.

"No, no," anſwered his father:—"Go down this dance, and take no notice—if then he does not come, go ſee if you can find him. I have been in ſearch of him myſelf, but to no purpoſe.—I fancied he might be in your room. I went to the library door, for I could have ſworn I heard ſomebody walking there; but the door was locked, and I called and knocked at it in vain. If Philip was there, he had ſome

reaſon—no good one, I fear—for not anſwering."

Orlando, now ready to ſink into the earth, yet unable to fly from his intolerable taſk, began the dance, after having been twice called upon by his partner; but thinking only of the terror Monimia muſt have been in, while ſhut up in the library ſhe heard his father at the door, and overwhelmed with vexation at being thus detained from her, he could no longer command that portion of attention that was requiſite even to the figure of the dance. But having blundered four or five times, turned the wrong women, and run againſt the men, then miſſed his time, and put every body out, he ſaid in a hurrying way to Miſs Hollybourn, who began to be much diſcompoſed by his miſtakes—"I really beg a thouſand pardons, but Iſabella's dance is ſo extremely difficult I cannot go down it—I ſhall only diſtreſs you, Madam, by my blunders; had we not better go to the bottom?"

"Dear

"Dear Sir," cried the lady bridling, "I can find no ſuch difficulty in it. If you would only take the trouble to attend a moment, I am ſure I could explain it to you, ſo that you *could* not make a miſtake.—Now only obſerve—We firſt paſs between the ſecond and third couples—and I lead out the two gentlemen, and you the two ladies—then meet and allemande—then *le moulin* at bottom—then I turn the third gentleman—then you———"

Orlando, unable to command himſelf, ſaid, ſtill more confuſedly, "No, upon my honour, I ſhall never do it. I am very ſorry to diſappoint you, Madam; and wiſh I could for this dance recommend you another partner." He then bowed, and was walking away, when ſhe bounced after him.

"You don't imagine there is any other perſon here," cried ſhe, biting the end of her fan—"I hope you don't imagine there is any body elſe here with whom *I* ſhall dance!"

"Pardon me, Madam," ſaid Orlando, taking

taking her hand; "here is my elder brother, who has even a better right to that honour than I have." At this moment his eyes were gratified by the ſight of Philip, to whom he, without waiting for Miſs Hollybourn's anſwer, led her, and cried, "Dear Phil, here am I in the moſt awkward diſtreſs imaginable; Miſs Hollybourn wiſhes to dance this dance down, and I am ſo ſtupid I cannot do the figure. I am ſure you will be very happy to ſupply my place."

Philip, who was never much diſpoſed to ſacrifice his own pleaſure to the gratification of others, and who had ſchemes of his own on foot, anſwered with leſs than his uſual ceremony (for he was never more polite for having drunk a good deal):

"A-hey, Sir Rowland! who told you ſo? How the devil ſhould I, who am no dancer, execute what is too difficult for ſo perfect a caperer as thou art—Sir Knight?"

Mortified beyond endurance at being thus rejected, Miſs Hollybourn, diſengaging

ing her hand with an angry jerk from Orlando's, ſaid haughtily—"Pray, Mr. Orlando, ſpare yourſelf this trouble; I am content to ſit ſtill." She then walked away; and Orlando, not giving himſelf time to conſider what he did, ſaid in a whiſper to Philip—"If you have any compaſſion, my dear Phil, take her for this dance—I will be grateful, believe me, and I will not deſire to puniſh you with her above half an hour."

"D—n her, a little carroty, pug-noſed moppet!" cried Philip, "as ugly and as inſolent as the devil—why ſhould I take the trouble to humour her?"

"It will oblige me beyond expreſſion," anſwered Orlando; "it will oblige my father and mother."

Philip juſt then recollecting that he was upon his good behaviour, agreed, though with an ill grace; and Orlando eagerly carrying him up to Miſs Hollybourn, who ſat fanning herſelf and ſwelling at the top of the room, began a ſpeech, in which he

blundered worſe than he had done in dancing; but Philip took it out of his hands, and ſaid—"Madam, I am ſo much in an habit, in *this* houſe, of giving the *pas* to my brother here, Sir Rowland, that I really dared not aſpire to the honour of your fair hand, till I perfectly underſtood that he had relinquiſhed it for the preſent dance; but as he has now explained himſelf, if you will allow me the bliſs of being his double, I will acquit myſelf to the beſt of my poor abilities; and if you, charming Miſs Hollybourn, will deign to inſtruct me, you ſhall find, that under ſo lovely a preceptreſs I ſhall make up in docility for deficiency of practice."

Miſs Hollybourn had ſo little natural ſenſe among all her acquirements, that this ſpeech, which from its ſubſtance, and ſtill more from the manner of its delivery, was evidently meant in ridicule, ſeemed to her to be very polite, and made very much in earneſt. She therefore, caſting a look towards Orlando, much leſs ſweet than thoſe ſhe had favoured him with towards the beginning

ginning of the evening, aſſented with a ſmirk to the propoſal of his brother—and immediately joined the dancers; while Orlando, trembling leſt ſome new interruption ſhould again deprive him of the ſight of Monimia, haſtened to find Selina, to whom he beckoned, and whiſpered to her to come round another way, where he would meet her, that their going out together might not be remarked. He changed his mind about ſpeaking to his mother, fearing leſt ſhe ſhould propoſe going too, if the object was only to ſhew Selina his room; and he thought it better to riſk an enquiry after Selina, which perhaps might not be made, or, if it were, might eaſily be anſwered.

It was the cuſtom on theſe occaſions for the inferior ſervants not to come into the hall till the Lady and her company, if ſhe happened to have any, were withdrawn. When the buſineſs of the dinner and tea tables was over, they became ſpectators from a railed gallery, which over the entrance to the

hall

hall made a communication between the principal apartments above. Here the upper houſe-maid, the footmen, and the cook had been ſtationed—Betty, moſt ſuperb in red ribbands, not quite ſo long as the reſt.

Monimia had been forbidden by Mrs. Lennard to appear at all during any part of the evening; an injunction which ſhe was not at all diſpoſed to diſobey. She was far, therefore, from envying Betty, who came into her room all in a flutter, as ſoon as ſhe was dreſſed, to ſhew her finery, and deſcant on the pleaſure ſhe expected in dancing when Madam was gone, and the gentlefolks, and boaſting how many ſolicitations ſhe had already had from the young men. Monimia, glad to get her out of the room, thought only of fulfilling her engagement with Orlando, and of the pleaſure and comfort of being made known to one of his ſiſters; yet her timidity and diffidence made her fear this interview as much as ſhe wiſhed it. Unconſcious of the

the intereſting ſweetneſs of her countenance, and the ſimple graces of her form, ſhe feared leſt Selina might think her brother's affection ill placed, and blame his attachment to an object of ſo little merit. Under theſe impreſſions, ſhe would have given herſelf all the advantages that dreſs afforded; but her ſcanty wardrobe left her very little choice, and ſhe had no means of varying her appearance from what it uſually was—a white muſlin gown being the utmoſt of her finery. She took care, however, to diſpoſe her hair in the moſt becoming manner ſhe could; and having finiſhed her little toilet, ſhe deſcended with a palpitating heart and a light ſtep to the part of the houſe through which ſhe was to paſs in going to the Study. It was now empty, for all the ſervants were in the gallery, waiting the departure of their Lady, to join the feſtivity of the night; and Monimia glided through the north wing, which was never at any time inhabited, and without any miſadventure reached the Study, where ſhe

ſhe waited in trembling ſuſpenſe the arrival of Orlando and Selina.

Every body being engaged in the middle of the houſe, that part of it was as ſilent as if there was no buſtle in the other, except the diſtant ſound of the muſic in the great hall, to which Monimia, with the door of the Study a-jar, involuntarily liſtened; when ſhe was ſuddenly alarmed by a voice in the adjoining parlour, talking and laughing, and apparently romping, and a man's voice anſwering in a half whiſper, and begging of the firſt perſon, whom ſhe knew to be Betty, to be more quiet. As her being diſcovered in Orlando's Study would have ruined her peace for ever, ſhe ſhut-to the door as ſoftly as ſhe could, and turned the key. The converſation between the two people without appeared to be ſo animated, that ſhe flattered herſelf they did not hear her; but as ſhe ſtill remained liſtening at the door, hardly daring to breathe, her terror was increaſed by hearing them approach and attempt to open it.

it. "Egad! it is locked," cried a voice which Monimia then firſt diſcovered to be young Somerive:—"Does Sir Rowland always lock his door?"

"Generally he does," replied the other, "but I dare ſay among the houſe keys there's one that will open it—yet, hang it, don't let us try. He'll come perhaps, and that you know will be very diſagreeable."

"He come!" ſaid Philip—"No, no, he's ſafe enough—He dares as well jump into the fire as quit the poſt where the old woman has placed him—Come, come—ſee if there's no other key will open this door. Beſides, as to his coming, what ſhould he come here for? 'Tis more likely, if he can get away, he'll go to viſit Miſs in the turret."

"Lord!" cried Betty, "how you have that notion ſtuffed into your head—when I tell you again and again, he no more meets Miſs, as you calls her, than the child unborn. Sure I ſhould know——She! a poor innocent ſilly thing! I don't believe

he takes any account of her——But huſh! Oh gemini! who's there?"

The voice of the elder Somerive was now heard, calling aloud in the paſſage leading to the parlour they were in for his eldeſt ſon. "Philip!" cried he, "Philip! —where are you?"

"'Tis my father," ſaid Philip—"Cannot we get out without meeting him?"

"Oh yes," replied Betty; "follow me, and don't ſpeak for all the world."

She then opened another door which led out into the garden, which, as Orlando uſually came in that way, was ſeldom locked; and as all this had paſſed in the dark, they glided away unperceived—not a moment however before Mr. Somerive, entering with a candle the room they had quitted, gave a new alarm to the terrified Monimia. Mr. Somerive, who had heard the footſteps of the fugitives as they left the parlour, imagined ſomebody was walking in the Study—He therefore tried the door on the other ſide of which poor Monimia

ſtill

ſtill ſtood trembling, and again loudly called on Philip Somerive; entreating him, if he was there, to anſwer him, and repreſenting all the ill conſequences of his thus diſappearing abruptly, after having been received into an houſe where he had before given offence, but where it was ſo material for him to be thought well of. No anſwer however was returned; and at length Monimia heard Mr. Somerive cloſe his fruitleſs remonſtrance with a deep ſigh, and depart.

Theſe repeated alarms now ſeemed to ſubſide, and a dead ſilence enſued, but ſtill Orlando came not.—Monimia, not daring to have a candle left the light ſhould be diſcerned under the door, ſat down in the window-ſeat which was the neareſt to it to liſten for his arrival, though doubting from what his brother had ſaid whether he would arrive at all. The large old library, half furniſhed with books and half hung with tapeſtry, and where the little light afforded by a waning moon gleamed faintly through the

the upper parts of the high caſements which the window ſhutters did not reach, was perhaps the moſt gloomy apartment that fancy could imagine. Monimia looked round her, and ſhuddered—The affright ſhe had undergone in the chapel, though it was explained, ſtill dwelt upon a mind which had ſo early been rendered liable to the terrors of ſuperſtition; and ſhe looked towards the door that opened to the paſſage of the chapel, fancying ſome hideous ſpectre would appear at it: or ſhe reaſoned herſelf out of ſuch an idea, only to give way to one more horrid; and figured to herſelf that the ruffian whom Orlando had deſcribed to her, and whoſe name was held in dread by the whole country, might enter at it as he had once done before. Againſt this apprehenſion ſhe might have been ſecured by ſatisfying herſelf that the door was locked; but ſhe had not courage to croſs the room.

Sitting therefore and liſtening to every ſound, ſhe again diſtinguiſhed the muſic

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in the great hall, which, as the wind ſwelled or fell, floated through the reſt of the houſe; and ſhe could not help contraſting that ſcene of feſtive mirth with her dark and gloomy ſolitude:—"How happy," ſaid ſhe, "are the Miſs Somerives, and this other young lady! They, under the ſanction of their parents, are gaily enjoying an innocent and agreeable amuſement; while I, a poor unprotected being, wander about in darkneſs and in dread, and, though I do nothing wrong, undergo the terrors and alarms of guilt.—But, do I not act wrong? Alas! I am afraid I do—It *muſt* be wrong to carry on a clandeſtine correſpondence, to meet by ſtealth a young man whom his friends would diſcard were they to know he met me at all—It muſt ſurely be wrong to incur imputations from which, if once they are believed, it is impoſſible I can ever be vindicated——wrong to let Orlando hazard, for me, the loſs of Mrs. Rayland's favour—and wrong to put myſelf in the way of being believed no better than the ſervant,

vant, of whoſe light conduct I have ſeen ſo many inſtances, beſides that which this moment happened, of her privately meeting Mr. Philip Somerive. How could I bear to be thought of by others as I think of her! and yet I ſeem to act as culpably. Oh Orlando! ſurely if you thought of this, you, who are ſo generous, ſo anxious for my happineſs, would never expoſe me to it. Yet we muſt meet thus, or never meet at all!—and could I bear to be deprived of ſeeing him for the little, the very little time that is yet to paſs before he is ſent from hence—never—never perhaps to return?"

This ſad idea filled her eyes with tears; and ſhe was not recovered from the agony into which it threw her, when ſhe again heard footſteps in the parlour—Somebody trode lightly along. Monimia liſtened, and fancied there was more than one perſon—Immediately the lock was turned; and the door being faſtened, a voice, which ſhe recogniſed with joy for that of Orlando, ſaid,

in a half-whiſper: "Monimia! are you not there? It is Selina and I—open the door therefore without apprehenſion."—Monimia remembered, with affright, that the voices of the two brothers bore a great reſemblance to each other, and ſhe again heſitated.—But Orlando ſpeaking louder, and her recollecting that his brother could not know that Selina was to accompany him, ſhe, though with trembling apprehenſion, turned the key, and Orlando and his ſiſter appeared.

"Let me," cried he, as he put Monimia into the arms of Selina—"let me unite in bonds of everlaſting friendſhip the two lovelieſt and moſt beloved of beings!" Selina tried to ſay, "Whoever is dear to Orlando is ſo to me, and I rejoice in thus being allowed to ſay ſo." But, though ſhe had innocently ſtudied the ſentence, ſhe was too much confuſed to make it articulate; and Monimia was quite unable to ſpeak at all. In a moment, however, Orlando, attempting to hide the uneaſy flut-

ter of his own thoughts, approached them with a candle which he had lit at the embers of his fire; and, reminding them how ſhort their interview muſt be, bade them both ſit down—"and let us," added he, "endeavour to enjoy moments ſo brief and ſo precious."

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

SELINA, as timid, and almoſt as new to the world as Monimia herſelf, was too much terrified at the riſk Orlando ran, and at what ſhe herſelf hazarded, to be ſoon compoſed. She could hardly, indeed, have been in greater trepidation had ſhe eſcaped from the company to have met a lover of her own. Her eyes, however, were occupied in examining the face and figure of Monimia; and no feminine envy induced her to deny the exiſtence of that beauty or ſweetneſs of which Orlando had ſaid ſo much. She even thought Monimia more lovely than her brother had deſcribed her, yet ſhe ſaw her to little advantage; for, the alarming ſituation ſhe had been in for almoſt an hour and a half, the apprehen-

ſion leſt Orlando ſhould not come, the reflections which aroſe while ſhe waited for him, and the emotion with which ſhe now for the firſt time beheld his ſiſter, had robbed her fair cheeks of their tender bloom; her eyes were ſwollen, and her voice was faltering and faint. Orlando ſeated her near Selina, and, ſitting down by them, threw one arm round each of them; and, looking with a ſmile on both, ſaid, "Why, what ſilent girls you are!—Selina! is it thus you greet your new friend? You who will talk to me of her for an hour, and never ceaſed ſoliciting of me to contrive this unhoped for meeting?—And you, Monimia! Come, come, I muſt have you more converſable.—Let us conſider, my dear girls, how you may meet hereafter; for, without accompliſhing that, the preſent meeting will only ſerve to tantalize us all."

The tears which ſhe had for a moment reſtrained, again filled the eyes of Monimia.—But, turning them tenderly on Orlando, ſhe ſighing ſaid, "Ah! how can I hope your

your ſiſter Selina, amiable and indulgent as ſhe ſeems, will again incur, for me, hazard which I ſee now makes her tremble, and fears which I myſelf can hardly endure?—Indeed, Orlando, if you did but know what I have ſuffered ſince I waited here in expectation of your coming!"——"I know it," cried Orlando, imagining ſhe alluded to his father's having been at the door of the Study—"But luckily you had taken the precaution to lock the door; which I, little ſuſpecting that this part of the houſe would be viſited, had neglected to deſire. So, as my father neither ſaw nor ſuſpected any thing but that my brother was in this room, there is no harm done, nor any thing to fear."

Monimia ſighed, but thought it was improper, before Selina, to repeat the dialogue that ſhe had heard between Mr. Philip Somerive and his female companion. She was far, however, from believing there was nothing to fear; and their ſhort conference was to her embittered with

the dread of a diſcovery, which ſhe could not conquer. Selina, however, truſting to the judgment of her brother, and deſirous of obliging him, ſucceeded better in conquering the reſtraint ſhe had at firſt felt; and, charmed with the voice, the manner and perſon of Monimia, ſhe eagerly entered into his views, and talked over the means by which they might ſometimes meet, if, as was too probable, invincible obſtacles continued to be oppoſed to their ſeeing each other by the conſent of Mr. and Mrs. Somerive—that of Mrs. Rayland could not be aſked, and that of Mrs. Lennard they were ſure would not be granted.

In this converſation Orlando ſpoke of what was to happen when he was gone, in terms that ſignified how certain he was that he ſhould go. Monimia's heart ſunk as he repeated, "When *I* am not here, I cannot ſee that there can be any objection to your openly ſeeing my ſiſters."—"Alas!" thought ſhe, "what wretched company ſhall we then be to each other! yet to ſee

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the ſiſters of Orlando will always be a comfort to me." Selina too heard with extreme pain the frequent mention he made of his departure; and having, from many obſervations ſhe had made on the behaviour of General Tracy, during his reſidence of almoſt five weeks in her father's houſe, conceived a very unfavourable opinion of him—her diſlike amounted almoſt to deteſtation when ſhe conſidered him as being the principal mover of the plan which was thus to rob her of her beloved brother. Whatever ſhe thought of his conduct in other reſpects, ſhe had the prudence to keep to herſelf, and affected to diſlike him only on account of Orlando.

Among the various little ſchemes which were conſidered for the future acquaintance of Selina and Monimia, none ſeemed ſufficiently ſafe to be adopted without farther conſideration; but Orlando promiſed to think of them all, and to acquaint them both with the reſult of his reflections. It was by this time neceſſary to part—Orlando

propoſed leading his ſiſter back to the room, and carrying her immediately to his mother, to tell her that ſhe had been in his apartment, that any ſurprize excited by her abſence might be ended without farther enquiry; while Monimia hoped to find her way back to her own room, as ſafely as ſhe had before traverſed the houſe in her way from it.

They were then reluctantly bidding adieu, when they were thunderſtruck by an attempt from without to force open the door. Orlando, thrown for a moment entirely off his guard, turned pale; and, caſting towards Monimia a look of anguiſh and terror, he cried, "Who can it be? what ſhall we do?"—The tender timid Monimia had at this inſtant more preſence of mind than he had: "Let me go," ſaid ſhe, "into your bed-chamber—there I can lock myſelf in: then aſk who it is; and, if it is one who has a right to enquire into your actions, open the door, and let him ſee you are ſitting here with your ſiſter." There was not a moment to deliberate, for

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the perſon without ſtill tried to open the door. Orlando waved his hand to Monimia to execute her project:—ſhe glided away, and ſhut after her the door, which was hung on both ſides with tapeſtry and ſhut without noiſe, while Orlando demanded, in a loud and angry voice, who was at the door, and what was their buſineſs? At firſt a feigned voice anſwered, "Open the door, good friends, and you ſhall know our buſineſs." Orlando anſwered, "I ſhall not open it till I know to whom;"—and then a violent burſt of laughter diſcovered it to be Philip—who cried, "Soho! have I caught you, Sir Roland? Is this my good, pious and immaculate brother?" "What folly is this!" ſaid Orlando angrily as he opened the door—"and is it not ſtrange that I cannot ſit a moment in my own room with Selina, but you muſt break in upon us like a drunken conſtable?" "Gently, Sir Knight!" anſwered Philip Somerive as he ſtaggered into the room—"fair and ſoftly, if you pleaſe! no hard words to your elders,

moſt valorous chevalier!—Selina is it?—By this light ſo it is! Well—I did not think, my good brother, you were ſo eager to put off your precious bargain upon me, only for the pleaſure of a *tête-à-tête* with our little ſimple Selina. I thought you had very different game in view—Egad, I'm not clear now that I have been miſtaken—Heh, child!" added he turning to Selina, "are you very ſure you are not a blind? why, my dear little whey face, what makes you look ſo pale?"

"Your ſtrange behaviour, brother," ſaid Selina, who tried to collect ſpirit enough to ſpeak without betraying the agitation ſhe was thrown into. "Come, come, child!" replied he, "lectured as I am on all hands, I ſhall not let babes and ſucklings preach to me. Your mamma, miſs, won't be very well pleaſed, I can tell you, if ſhe does not find you with the other miſſes; they are juſt going away, I believe. The old woman is gone up to her apartment, and the miſſes are ordered off. There's

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the General, like my mother's gentleman-uſher, hunting the fair bevy together, and there will be a hue and cry after you in a moment."—Very well!" anſwered Selina; "Mamma will not be angry when ſhe knows I am only with Orlando." "And I," ſaid Orlando, "ſhall take care of her back; therefore you need not, Philip, be under any concern about her."

"Well, then," cried this tormentor, "as I am curſed tired, my dear knight, and have got a deviliſh headach, prithee, when thou art gone, lend me thy apartment for half an hour's quiet. I've promiſed George Green and half a dozen more of them, to meet them by and by in Pattenſon's room, and make out the night according to good old cuſtom; and if I get a nap while the ſober party, the cats and their kittens, are trundling off, I ſhall eſcape all the plaguy formality of "Wiſh you good night, dear ma'am!—hope you'll catch no cold!—ſhall be glad to hear you got home ſafe!—moſt agreeable evening indeed!—wiſh we may meet

meet here this time twelvemonth!"—and ſuch mawkiſh cant; and I ſhall be as freſh as morning to meet the good fellows by and by—So, come, Sir Rowly, lend me your bed for a little. I'll ſend in pretty Betty," added he leering, "to make it for you before you come to bed."

Orlando, fearing, from this ſtrange propoſal, his brother was aware how impoſſible it was for him to grant it, now looked more confuſed than ever, and ſaid very peeviſhly, "You are ſo drunk now, Philip, that it will be much wiſer and more decent for you to go home directly—I at leaſt will have nothing to do with your ſtay. Come, Selina, let us go—Philip, I will follow you."

"No, indeed you will not!" replied he, ſetting himſelf down by the fire. If you won't lend me your bed, you will at leaſt let me have a chair."

"I will leave nobody in my room," ſaid Orlando warmly.

"What! haſt got any bank-notes? has thy old woman given thee a little hoard?

Egad

Egad ſhe has!—I've a good mind to rummage, that I may know what brotherly help thou couldſt give in caſe of a bad run."

"This is inſupportable!" cried Orlando:—"What ſhall I do with him?" whiſpered he to Selina. Poor Selina, unable to adviſe, was in as great conſternation as the half diſtracted Orlando, who walked about the room a moment, conſidering by what means he could diſengage himſelf from this troubleſome viſitor; but unable to think of any, he was beginning, in mere deſpair, to expoſtulate with him anew, when the approach of other perſons was heard in the parlour; and Mr. Somerive himſelf, apparently in great diſpleaſure, entered the Library.

"Orlando!" cried he, "Philip! Selina! what is all this? to what purpoſe are ye all here?—Selina! your mother is much amazed at your abſence.

Orlando, then collecting his ſcattered thoughts, related, that he had merely brought

brought Selina thither for a few moments to ſhew her his apartments, which ſhe had never ſeen; and that, while they were ſitting quietly together, Philip, "whoſe ſituation, Sir, you ſee," ſaid he, "came in, and I could not prevail upon him to leave us, or to ſuffer us to return altogether to the company."

Mr. Somerive, now ſpeaking with an air of authority and concern to his eldeſt ſon, received only an account of his requeſt to Orlando, which, he inſiſted upon it, was a very reaſonable one. "You are indeed," ſaid his father, "fit only to go to bed; but it muſt not be in Mrs. Rayland's houſe—you muſt come, Sir, with me."

Young Somerive then aroſe to obey; for his father, when he was preſent, and had reſolution to be peremptory, ſtill retained ſome power over him. He ſtaggered however ſo much that he was unable to proceed. Mr. Somerive bade Orlando aſſiſt him, which he was willing enough to do; but as Philip leaned upon him he whiſpered, "Sir Knight!

Knight! if I can give the reverend ſenior the ſlip, I will ſtill have my nap, and finiſh the evening with thoſe joyous ſouls; d—me if I don't!"

This threat terriſied Orlando more than ever: he knew how likely it was to be executed; and therefore, in the hope that he might be able preſently to return and releaſe Monimia, whoſe longer abſence from her room might be attended with the moſt alarming conſequences, he haſtily determined to lock the Study door, and thus convince his brother that his ſcheme of returning thither, to which he ſaw he adhered either with the ſtupid obſtinacy of intoxication, or diſguiſing, under its appearance, knowledge more deſtructive, was impracticable. He therefore, as ſoon as they were all out of the room, locked the door, and, ſaying aloud he had done ſo, he proceeded before his father, with a candle in his hand, to the apartment where Mrs. Rayland, much fatigued with the exertions of the evening, was taking

leave

leave of her gueſts. Philip, who ſeemed by no means in a condition to appear before her, had been conſigned, in the way, to the care of one of the men-ſervants, who had ſeated him by the fire in a paſſage-parlour, where he was in a few moments faſt aſleep.

Mrs. Somerive, to whom Selina's abſence was eaſily accounted for, gently chid her for not ſaying whither ſhe was going; and the long ceremonies of good-night on all hands being at length over, Orlando handed to her coach the nymph whom he had, in her opinion, ſo ungallantly forſaken. He found her ſo much hurt at being made over to his brother, who probably had not acquitted himſelf to her ſatisfaction, that he found it neceſſary to apologize, at which however he was extremely awkward, aſſuring her, with much heſitation, that he was not aware that ſhe would ſo ſoon quit the dancing-room, and that he flattered himſelf with the expectation of being

being honoured with her hand in a dance, where he could acquit himſelf in a manner more worthy ſo excellent a partner.

The Lady received his excuſes with coldneſs and diſdain; but the Doctor, who heard, ſeemed more willing to accept them in good part. "I never ſuſpected, Sir," cried the conſequential Divine, "that, with your underſtanding, you could fail to appreciate the Lady whoſe hand you held—It is not the fond partiality of the father, but common candour, which leads me to ſay, that of equals ſhe has few in merit, ſuperiors none. I hope we ſhall meet here again, Mr. Orlando; and that we ſhall ſee you, with good Mr. and Mrs. Somerive, and their fine family, at Combe Park. Good Mrs. Rayland, I heartily hope, that moſt worthy lady, who bears her years ſurpriſingly well, will be able, before the winter's rigorous advances lay an embargo on valetudinarians; I ſay, I hope my excellent old friend will fix on ſome day to grace our poor abode,

and

and ſacrifice with us to the hoſpitable deities."

Orlando bowed his aſſent to a ſpeech which he began to fear would laſt all night. —No effort of his, however, could have ſtopped the ſtream of the Doctor's eloquence, when once it began to flow; but fortunately Mrs. Hollybourn found it cold, and ſaid peeviſhly, "Dear Doctor! you keep Ann in a thorough air—Pray conſider —ſhe has been dancing, and I tremble for the effects of ſuch a current of air——"

Bleſſings on your care! thought Orlando, who was in the moſt extreme uneaſineſs all this time, leſt Monimia, who he knew could not eſcape from his room, ſhould be miſſed in her own. The parade, however, that was yet made before this family were ſeated in their carriage, took up ſeveral minutes more; and even when Orlando had at length the ſatisfaction to ſee them driven from the door, he was compelled to attend to the diſpoſal of his father, his mother,

ther, his four ſiſters, and the General, who could not for ſome time ſettle how they ſhould return—the General being ſolicitous to take two of the young ladies in his poſt-chaiſe; to which Mrs. Somerive very peremptorily objected, to the amazement of her huſband, who, not having the leaſt idea of her motives, cried, "Bleſs me, my dear! it will be better ſurely to put any two of the girls under the care of General Tracy, than to crowd him with me and Philip, who, if we can find him, is not, I fear, in a ſtate to travel without incommoding his companions."—"Well, then," replied Mrs. Somerive frightened at having ſaid more than ſhe intended, "I will have the pleaſure of going in the General's carriage, and Emma can ſit between us without inconvenience." In this arrangement the General was obliged to acquieſce, and even to appear pleaſed with it, though it baffled the ſchemes he had been laying the whole evening. This ſecond carriage then departed; and now Orlando, who could well

well have left his ſiſters in the care of his father, would have flown to his impriſoned Monimia—But a new difficulty aroſe: his brother, for whom ſearch had been making, as well in the room where he had been left ſleeping, as in every other part of the houſe that had been opened for company, was no-where to be found.

The Somerive family had all taken their leave of Mrs. Rayland, and waited in a parlour near the hall. Mr. Somerive now expreſſed great alarm at the ill ſucceſs of thoſe inquiries that had been made after his eldeſt ſon. "Perhaps, Sir," ſaid Orlando—"perhaps my brother, finding himſelf, when he awoke, unfit to appear, is gone home on foot." Orlando had indeed very different conjectures; and, in the whole tenor of his behaviour that evening, found reaſon to fear that he had but too poſitive information relative to Monimia, and was determined to detect her. This apprehenſion, and the dread of her being miſſed by her aunt, who would in all probability

bability viſit her room as ſoon as the company were diſperſed, gave to Orlando's manner ſuch wildneſs and confuſion as increaſed the diſtreſs of his father. Orlando repeated, "I am perſuaded, Sir, Philip is gone home—I dare ſay you may yourſelf return quite eaſy."

"Are you ſo eaſy yourſelf then?" anſwered Mr. Somerive—"I think not, Orlando, from your countenance. Even admitting that my ſon has walked homeward, and will not commit any impropriety which ſhall expoſe him, or injure him in the opinion of Mrs. Rayland, is there nothing to fear for the ſafety of a man who has ſuch a road to travel, in ſuch a ſtate?"

"Let me, Sir, go then, and ſeek for him on that road; and do you, I entreat you, return home and make yourſelf eaſy. A longer delay will not only alarm my mother, but occaſion enquiries on the part of Mrs. Rayland, who will probably hear of it by her ſervants;—nor can it indeed anſwer any

any purpoſe, ſince every ſearch that can be made has already been made within the houſe."

"Have you the key of your own apartment?

"I have, Sir," replied Orlando, trembling leſt his father was about to aſk for it. I locked the door of the Study when we all left it together."

"He cannot therefore be there," ſaid Mr. Somerive, muſing—"I cannot conjecture where he can be!"

"Pray, Sir," cried Orlando, "pray be compoſed, and ſuffer me to go the parkway homeward—I am perſuaded my brother is ſafe."

"He does not indeed," ſaid Mr. Somerive with a deep ſigh—"he does not deſerve the ſolicitude I feel for him. Orlando, on you I depend for finding and conducting him home."

Orlando ſolemnly aſſured his father and his ſiſters that he would do ſo; and as

their

their remaining longer at the Hall contributed nothing towards relieving their uneaſineſs, they at length determined to go.

When they were gone, Orlando hoped that the alarms of the night were over, and that Mrs. Lennard, as the tenants and all the ſervants were ſtill dancing in the hall, would not have time to think of the uſual ceremony of locking Monimia's door at ten o'clock. It was now however twelve.

With a palpitating heart then he went to find her. She was ſtill locked in his bedchamber, where, half diſtracted by fears of every kind, ſhe had had ſufficient time to reflect on all the hazards ſhe incurred by theſe clandeſtine meetings with Orlando; and ſometimes determined, if ſhe eſcaped detection this time, never to be prevailed upon to venture it again.—Then the ſad recollection, that he would ſoon ceaſe to aſk it, and that, if ſhe did not meet him thus, ſhe muſt relinquiſh the pleaſure of ever ſpeaking to him at all, ſhook the reſolution which fear and prudence united to

produce:—and ſhe almoſt wiſhed, dreadful as it would at the moment be, that a diſcovery might compel them to the expedient Orlando once named—that of their flying together, and truſting to Providence for the reſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

ORLANDO found Monimia alarmed and dejected; but hardly giving himſelf time to re-aſſure her, and account for his long abſence, he beſought her to haſten to her room—"I hope," ſaid he, "and believe the houſe is quite uninhabited on this ſide ſtill, for all the ſervants are in the hall. My brother is miſſing, and I have promiſed my father to find him and conduct him home. What a taſk! for I know not where to look for him: not a moment muſt be loſt, ſince my family are in ſuch cruel alarms. However, I will wait here, my Monimia, till I think you are ſafe in your turret, and then ſet out—I know not whither—on this ſearch."

Monimia haſtened to do as he deſired. "But is Betty," ſaid ſhe, "in the hall? I have reaſons, which I have not now time to explain, for believing they are together." "I know not," anſwered Orlando, whoſe fears every moment increaſed; "I care not what happens if you are but once in ſafety."

Monimia then with light and timid ſteps paſſed through the adjoining parlour. She found all that end of the houſe deſerted, and regained the long paſſage which led from her turret to the apartment of her aunt. All was quiet; and ſhe flattered herſelf that Mrs. Lennard, occupied by the attention neceſſary to be ſhewn to the gueſts, had for once omitted the ceremony of locking the doors of that part of the houſe, and particularly hers, at the uſual hour. In this hope ſhe tripped along the paſſage, and had juſt reached the door of her own room, when Mrs. Lennard, with a candle in her hand, appeared at the other end. There was no hope of eſcape—She

ſtood

ſtood trembling, unable to open the lock, which ſhe held in her hand; while her aunt with a haſty ſtep and an angry countenance advanced towards her—"Hey-day, Madam!" cried Mrs. Lennard, "pray, what makes you here? ſo dreſſed too, I aſſure you! I thought I had ordered you not to leave your room. Pr'ythee, Miſs, where have you been? and how have you dared to diſobey my orders?"

"Dear aunt," cried the affrighted Monimia, in a voice almoſt inarticulate through fear—"Dear aunt! be not ſo very angry—Every year till now you were ſo good as to give me leave to go into the hall-gallery to look at the dancers for a quarter of an hour. I dreſſed myſelf in hopes that ſome time in the evening I ſhould ſee you to aſk leave—it grew very late, you did not come to my room, and ſo——"

"And ſo, huſſey, you left it without, did you?"—Monimia, unwilling to advance another direct falſehood, remained ſilent; and Mrs. Lennard, fixing her fierce en-

quiring eyes upon her, ſaid ſternly, "Monimia, there is ſomething in your conduct which I do not underſtand—I ſuſpect that you are a very wicked girl—I have had hints given me more than once, that you are impoſing upon me, and ruining yourſelf."

"How can I impoſe upon you, Madam?" ſaid Monimia, who, believing the criſis of her fate was now approaching, tried to collect a little ſpirit—"How can I impoſe upon you? Do you not always confine me to my room, and have I any means of leaving it without your conſent?"

"That is what I am determined to diſcover," cried Mrs. Lennard—(Monimia became paler than before)—"You have a falſe key, or you have ſome other means of getting out—However, it is not now a time to enquire into this. Go now, Madam, to your room, and to your bed. Having ſeen you here is enough to convince me, that the intelligence I have had given me is not without grounds. Come, Miſs, as you may

perhaps

perhaps chooſe to ſet out again—if you have, as I ſuſpect, the means of opening the door—I ſhall wait here till you are in bed, and take away the candle."

Monimia, who dreaded nothing ſo much as that Orlando might aſcend the ſecret ſtairs, in order to enquire if ſhe was ſafe, while her aunt was yet with her, haſtened to undreſs herſelf; and as ſhe feared that, if all was ſilent in her room, Orlando might ſpeak without the door, which would inevitably diſcover them at once, ſhe wiſhed, for the firſt time in her life, that the copious ſtream of eloquence with which the pleaſure of ſcolding always ſupplied Mrs. Lennard might now continue in full force—ſhe therefore contrived to ſay ſomething which ſhe imagined would produce this, and ſhe ſucceeded. Provoked at Monimia's attempt to excuſe or defend herſelf, and impatient at being kept from the party below, in which ſhe conſidered herſelf, now that her lady and the gueſts were withdrawn, as the firſt figure, Mrs. Lennard

ſpared not her lungs, nor was ſhe very nice in the choice of thoſe epithets which moſt forcibly expreſſed her anger againſt her niece. In the midſt of this harangue, Orlando, impatient to know whether Monimia was ſafe, and unable to ſet out in ſearch of his brother till he had obtained this ſatisfaction, ſoftly aſcended the narrow ſtairs, and in a moment was convinced that all their eſcapes, during this perilous evening, had ended in a complete diſcovery of their intelligence; for to nothing leſs could he impute the fury in which Mrs. Lennard appeared to be. Under this impreſſion, his ſpirits and temper quite exhauſted by the various perverſe accidents that had within a few hours befallen him—irritated by frequent diſappointment, and indignant at the inſults to which he believed Monimia was at the moment expoſed, he was on the point of burſting into the room, declaring his affection for her, and meeting at once the invectives of her aunt, the renunciation of all his hopes from Mrs. Rayland, and

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the diſpleaſure of his own family. He blamed himſelf for not having before taken a ſtep which, whatever might be its future conſequence, would at leaſt be deciſive, and ſave Monimia from thoſe cruel alarms and diſtreſſing conflicts to which his love had ſo long made her liable. But at the moment that his hand was lifted to execute this raſh purpoſe, the ſtorm within ſeemed to abate: he heard Mrs. Lennard ſay—"I aſſure you, that the very next time I ſee or hear the leaſt grounds for believing you are carrying on ſuch a correſpondence, that day ſhall be the laſt of your ſtay under this roof." This gave Orlando hope that they might not be abſolutely diſcovered; and at the ſame moment the idea of his father made more unhappy, and deploring the fate that gave him two ſons equally careleſs of their duty—of his beloved and affectionate mother weeping at the diſobedience of her children—aroſe forcibly to check his precipitate reſolution. He heſitated; he liſtened; Mrs. Lennard ſpoke

lower, but ſtill in a tone of remonſtrance and reproach. He determined to wait to ſpeak to Monimia after her departure, but ſhe ſeemed not likely to depart; and as he attentively liſtened to what he could not now very exactly diſtinguiſh, the terms in which ſhe expreſſed her indignation, he heard ſeveral voices calling him in the park. This was a new alarm—To iſſue from the lower part of the turret at ſuch an hour, when it was impoſſible he could have any buſineſs there, was not to be thought of: yet the door was not cloſed, and he believed it not improbable that the people who were he apprehended in ſearch of his brother, might at length ſeek *him* there; as his intoxication, when he was miſſing, might lead them to imagine that he might have gone into ſome of the buildings and have fallen aſleep. He deſcended therefore, and waited at the door. The voices were now at a diſtance; and apparently being near the apartment of Mrs. Rayland, the perſons who had before called aloud were afraid

afraid of diſturbing her. He ſeized this opportunity of eſcaping; and, following the ſound, which was ſtill heard at intervals, he met at length the groom and the under footman, who told him that Mr. Philip Somerive had returned about a quarter of an hour before into the room, where he was now ſo extremely riotous that he had got into a quarrel with one of the young farmers; that he had ſtripped to box; and that every interpoſition of theirs only ſerved to enrage him more. They therefore beſought Orlando to return into the hall, that he might appeaſe and prevail upon his brother to go home; for that their Lady, already alarmed by the noiſe, had ſent down orders to have the houſe immediately ſhut up, and for the people to depart. A thouſand times during the courſe of this evening had poor Orlando execrated his own folly, that had thus brought his brother into an houſe, where, while he had been ſuch an unceaſing torment to him, he had probably effectually ruined himſelf. But

there was now not a moment to give way to theſe repentant reflections. He haſtened therefore into the room, where his brother, awakened from the ſtupor of drunkenneſs into its moſt extravagant phrenſy, had taken ſome offence at a young man of the company, and was now withheld only by the united ſtrength of three ſtout farmers from fighting. Orlando for ſome time argued and implored in vain. The fury of Philip only changed its object, and was directed againſt him. But with his opponent, whoſe blunt Engliſh ſpirit was not, as he declared, "at all diſpoſed to yield tamely to the inſults of any 'ſquire, no not the biggeſt 'ſquire in the king's dominions," the cool reaſoning of Orlando had more effect. He ſoothed then this juſtly offended ruſtic, and, promiſing that Philip ſhould hereafter acknowledge the impropriety of his behaviour, he prevailed on him to depart with Pattenſon and ſome other of the men into another room; and then his brother being almoſt exhauſted, and relapſing again into

ſtupidity, Orlando wiſhed to conduct him home. This was however, on conſideration, found to be impoſſible; for he was equally unable to ride or walk, even with the aſſiſtance which Orlando was very ready to lend him. In this dilemma nothing remained but to put him into his own bed; where being at a great diſtance from Mrs. Rayland, there was no probability of her knowing the ſtate to which his intemperance had reduced him. This then he determined to do. Pattenſon and a party of the men who were in habits of drinking had already withdrawn: the women were huddling away to their reſpective homes; and Orlando, with the help of the groom, carried off the almoſt ſenſeleſs Philip to his own bed-chamber, where he left him on his bed; and then, haraſſed and unhappy as he was, fatigued with all that had happened, and torn to pieces with anxiety about Monimia, he yet had another taſk to perform, which he felt, however painful, to be neceſſary—and this was, to walk to

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Weſt Wolverton, that, by his account of Philip, he might quiet the fears of his father as to his perſonal ſafety.

He arrived there, quite worn out with uneaſineſs; and the pale countenance and diſhevelled hair with which he entered the parlour, ſeemed to confirm all the fears with which the unfortunate Somerive had been tormented on account of his eldeſt ſon. He found him walking backwards and forwards in the parlour, liſtening to every noiſe; and he had paſſed the whole interval in this manner, except that he had now and then gone up ſtairs to his wife, whom he had prevailed upon to go to bed, to perſuade her to mitigate thoſe fears under which he was himſelf agonized. At this juncture the appearance of Orlando, whoſe looks ſeemed to ſpeak only of ſome ſad cataſtrophe, deprived his father for a moment of the power of aſking what intelligence he brought; and when he could ſpeak, it was only to ſay—"Orlando! your brother?"—"He is ſafe, dear Sir," anſwered Orlando;

Orlando; "pray be not thus alarmed." "Relate then," cried Mr. Somerive in an eager voice, "relate where he is—wretched boy!"—"Indeed, Sir," ſaid Orlando extremely ſhocked at the look and manner of his father, "you conſider this matter more ſeriouſly than it deſerves, and are more alarmed than the occaſion ſeems to require." He then related what had happened, ſoftening however his brother's folly as much as he could; and aſſured his father that he would take care Philip ſhould return in the morning, and that Mrs. Rayland ſhould be kept ignorant of the confuſion his intemperance had occaſioned.

"You are a noble and excellent creature, Orlando," cried Somerive, with a ſigh as if his heart would break; "but God knows what will become of your unhappy brother. This relapſe into debauchery, ſo degrading, awakens all my fears—fears, which a little ſubſided on his unexpected return home. But it is not an hour, my dear boy, to detain you with the miſery that I ſee awaits

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us all. Since you have given up your bed to Philip, I desire you will take one here, while I hasten to quiet the anxiety which has almost overcome your poor mother, who imagined nothing less than that her son was drowned, or that some other horrid calamity had befallen him."

Mr. Somerive then departed; and Orlando, though somewhat comforted by having the power to relieve the sad solicitude of his parents, was infinitely too uneasy to feel any inclination to sleep, though he was so greatly fatigued. It was by this time daylight; and, after some reflection, he resolved to return back to the Hall, and to await in the library the hour when he should be delivered from the unwelcome inmate whom he had been compelled to admit. Every other anxiety however that assailed him was unfelt, when he thought of the situation in which he had left Monimia. The harsh tones in which the threats of Mrs. Lennard were delivered still rung in his ears; and his fancy represented the lovely victim of her

her ill humour drowned in tears, yielding to deſpair, and perhaps recollecting with anguiſh and regret the moments ſhe had given to his importunate love. It was broad day by the time he returned to the Hall, and the workmen and gardeners were diſperſed about the houſe. He dared not therefore indulge himſelf with another viſit to the turret; but having with ſome difficulty obtained admittance from the tired and ſleepy ſervants, he wrapped himſelf in his great coat, and ſat down in the Study, where he eaſily diſcovered, by the loud ſnoring from the adjoining room, that Philip was ſleeping away the effects of the powerful draughts of the preceding night. Orlando, half tempted to envy the ſtate of forgetfulneſs into which he had fallen, occupied himſelf in reflecting on the ſtrange and perverſe accidents of the evening, in which he and Monimia had trembled ſo often on the brink of diſcovery—perhaps were diſcovered, juſt at the time when they had flattered themſelves with the hope that they

they might the more ſecurely meet. He revolved all that was likely to happen if Mrs. Lennard was really acquainted with their correſpondence; and heſitated not to reſolve, in that caſe, to go to his father, to declare his affection for Monimia, and to reſcue her from the tyranny of her aunt, whatever might enſue. On the other hand, if their acquaintance yet remained doubtful, or only ſuſpected, he ſaw that prudence and duty, his tenderneſs for Monimia, and his affection for his father, equally dictated their preſent ſeparation; and that, to whichever of theſe he liſtened, they agreed in pointing out his leaving Monimia now, to acquire ſome eſtabliſhment which might give them at leaſt a probability, without the breach of any duty, of being happily united hereafter. There was ſomething humiliating to his ingenuous mind, in all the arts and prevarications which their clandeſtine correſpondence compelled him to uſe himſelf, and to teach the innocent Monimia. A thouſand times he wiſhed

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that he had been born the ſon of a day-labourer; that his parents, entertaining for him no views of ambition, had left him to purſue his own inclinations. A thouſand times he lamented that Monimia was not circumſtanced like Miſs Hollybourn, that he might openly have addreſſed her: and the image of the arrogant heireſs aroſe with redoubled diſguſt to his mind, when he compared her ſituation with that of his deſolate, orphan'd Monimia. More than three hours paſſed away while theſe thoughts were fluctuating in his mind. At the end of that time, he was arouſed by the entrance of Betty, who pertly demanded if he did not chooſe any breakfaſt?

He deſired to have it brought. To which the girl replied, "Perhaps you had rather breakfaſt with the old woman?"—"Whom do you mean?" enquired Orlando.

"Mean!" anſwered ſhe; "why, who ſhould I mean, but miſtreſs, and mother Lennard? There's no other old woman in the houſe as I knows on, nor there had not

not need. They've been enquiring after you."

"After me?"

"Yes," replied Betty. "And Madam I ſuppoſe will tie you on to her apron-ſtring ſoon, for ſhe is never eaſy without you. Upon my word, Mr. Orlando, you look a little rakiſh though, I think, for ſuch a *ſober* young gentleman, and conſidering too that you did not demean yourſelf with dancing as you uſed to do with us ſervants, after the gentlefolks were gone. I warrant however that you did not paſs the time at prayers."

"You give your tongue ſtrange licenſe," ſaid Orlando, who endeavoured to conceal his vexation, for he imagined that all alluded to Monimia. "However, do tell me, if Mrs. Rayland wiſhes me to breakfaſt with her?"

"I knows nothing about her wiſhes," replied the girl; "I only knows that Lennard have been aſking every ſervant in the houſe about you, and croſs-queſtioning one ſo that

that I ſuppoſe ſhe thoft I had got you locked up in my cupboard, as they ſay ſhe uſed for to have the men-folk in her younger days in the houſekeeper's ſtore-room. The old woman and the oven for that! Set a thief to catch a thief!"

"I do deſire," ſaid Orlando, "that you would have done with all this, and tell me whether Mrs. Lennard expects me at breakfaſt? "However," added he, pauſing, "I will alter my dreſs, and wait upon her at all events; and do be ſo good as to prepare in the mean time ſome breakfaſt for my brother."

Betty then left him apparently with pleaſure to execute this laſt commiſſion; and Orlando, after changing his clothes, went to Mrs. Lennard's room, to enquire whether Mrs. Rayland wiſhed to ſpeak to him, and at what time he might wait upon her. This however was not his only motive; he thought he ſhould immediately diſcern by Mrs. Lennard's reception of him, whether his fears of a partial or an entire diſcovery were

were well founded. He fortunately found Mrs. Lennard in the houſekeeper's room; and, accoſting her with his uſual intereſting addreſs, he enquired how Mrs. Rayland did after the fatigues of the evening, how ſhe was herſelf, and whether he might at any time that morning make a perſonal enquiry after Mrs. Rayland?

The ſage houſekeeper received his civilities with great coldneſs, and anſwered, even with ſome aſperity, that Mrs. Rayland was much better than ever ſhe could have expected after ſo much company. "As to your enquiry after her, Sir," added ſhe, "I don't know indeed how that may be; perhaps (fixing on him her penetrating eyes) there are *other* people in the houſe after whom you would *rather* aſk."

Orlando, whoſe conſcious blood roſe into his cheeks at this ſpeech, felt them glow, and the ſenſation increaſed his confuſion. "No," replied he, heſitating. "No, certainly you cannot ..... ſuppoſe ... that there is any body ..... that I ....

that

that I wiſh to enquire after more than Mrs. Rayland ..... I was much afraid that the fatigue would be too much for her."

"There are other people," replied the lady, "who were fatigued alſo." I muſt beg the favour of you, Mr. Orlando, not to interfere with my niece. I ſuppoſe it was by your deſire or contrivance that ſhe took the liberty of leaving her room laſt night, contrary to my poſitive orders."

Orlando, a little recovered from his conſternation, endeavoured to laugh this off, and was proving to Mrs. Lennard that it was impoſſible for *him* to have occaſioned this diſobedience, when a ſummons came for her to attend Mrs. Rayland; and "I was ordered, Sir," ſaid the footman, "to deſire you would come up alſo, if you were about the houſe."

Mrs. Lennard now ſtalked away with great dignity, and Orlando followed her, more than ever alarmed for Monimia.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

INSTEAD of the reproaches Orlando expected to hear, Mrs. Rayland received him, if not with ſo much cordial kindneſs as uſual, at leaſt without any appearance of anger. After the uſual compliments on his part, and ſome enquiries on hers, whether all thoſe who were immediately her gueſts had gone as ſoon as they left her, Mrs. Lennard withdrew, and Orlando was left alone with the old Lady, and again trembled leſt ſome remonſtrances were to be made; for his mind was ſo entirely occupied by that ſubject, that he forgot it was poſſible for the attention of others to be differently engaged.

His apprehenſions increaſed, when Mrs. Rayland

Rayland, after a ſolemn ſilence, thus began:

"I believe, Mr. Orlando, I have given you abundant proof that I eſteem you above the reſt of my kinſman's family."

Orlando bowed, and would have ſaid that he was ſenſible of and grateful for her kindneſs; but he could make nothing of the ſentence—but bluſhed and faltered while Mrs. Rayland went on.

"Your father has once or twice propoſed ſending you out into the world, and has conſulted me upon the occaſion. I ſuppoſe you are not unacquainted with the plan he has lately thought proper to propoſe for you."

Orlando, relieved by hearing that her diſcourſe did not tend whither he feared it would, ſaid that he knew General Tracy had offered his father to procure him a commiſſion; "an offer, Madam," continued he, "of which I waited to hear your opinion before I myſelf ventured to form any wiſhes upon the ſubject."

This was carrying his complaiſance farther than he had ever yet done. But, confuſed and apprehenſive as he was, he ſaid any thing which might turn the diſcourſe from what he moſt dreaded, without having his mind enough at liberty to enquire rigorouſly into the truth or propriety of what he uttered; and even the independent ſpirit he had always prided himſelf on ſupporting, was loſt amid his fears for Monimia.

Mrs. Rayland looked at him ſteadily for a moment—

"You are ready then," ſaid ſhe, "to follow any line of life, Orlando, which your friends approve?"

"I am, Madam; and always have been."

"And you do not diſlike the army?"

"Very far from it, Madam."

"I have been accuſtomed from my youth," reaſſumed the old Lady after another pauſe, "to conſider the profeſſion of arms as one of thoſe which is the leaſt derogatory to the name of a gentleman."

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"It is honourable, Madam, to any name."

"My grandfather," continued Mrs. Rayland, "after whom you were by the permiſſion of our family called—my grandfather, I ſay, Sir Orlando Rayland, appeared with diſtinguiſhed honour in the ſervice of his maſter in 1685, againſt the rebel Monmouth, though not of his religion. My father Sir Hildebrand diſtinguiſhed himſelf under Marlborough, when he was a younger brother, and ſaw much ſervice in Flanders. Of remoter anceſtors, I could tell you of Raylands who bled in the civil wars; we were always Lancaſtrians, and loſt very great property by our adherence to that unhappy family during the reigns of Edward the Fourth and Richard the Third. Thy great great grandfather, who was alſo called Orlando ....."

Mrs. Rayland had ſoon totally forgotten the young hero who was before her, while ſhe ran over the names and exploits of heroes paſt; and, loſt in their loyalty and

their proweſs, ſhe forgot that hardly any other record of them remained upon earth than what her memory and their pictures in the gallery above afforded. Orlando, however, heard her not only with patience but with pleaſure. In recurring thus to them when the queſtion of his profeſſional choice was before her, it appeared that ſhe had ſomehow aſſociated the idea of his future welfare with that of their paſt conſequence; and, beſides the ſatisfaction this diſcovery afforded him, he began to hope that his fears of any diſcovery were quite groundleſs.

Mrs. Rayland having at length completed the catalogue of the heroes of her family, and having no more to ſay, returned to the ſubject which had given riſe to this diſcuſſion.—"Therefore, young kinſman, I ſay that, if this worthy General Tracy will favour you with his countenance, if your father and your relations approve of it, and if you yourſelf are diſpoſed for the profeſſion of arms, I ſhall be glad not only

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to give you ſome aſſiſtance towards ſetting out, but to aid you from time to time in ſuch means of promotion as the General may point out to me."

Orlando, who now found the whole affair decided, felt one pang at the certainty which preſented itſelf, that he muſt quit, ſoon quit his beloved Monimia; it was ſevere, but momentary: and with equal warmth and ſincerity he thanked Mrs. Rayland for her goodneſs, and aſſured her that he was ready to avail himſelf of her generous intentions in his favour.

"But are you ſure, Mr. Orlando," added Mrs. Rayland interrupting his acknowledgments—"are you quite ſure that no unworthy connection, no improper attachment here, will make the departure for your regiment diſagreeable to you?"

The blood that had ſo often been the treacherous emiſſary of conſcience before, now flew to the cheeks of Orlando; indeed his whole countenance changed ſo much that Mrs. Rayland, though not very clear-

ſighted, perceived it. Her brow took that ſevere look which it almoſt always loſt in the preſence of her young favourite—"I ſee," cried ſhe, obſerving Orlando ſtill heſitate—"I ſee that I have not been miſ-informed."

Every thing ſeemed to depend on the preſence of mind which he was at this moment able to exert. He recovered himſelf, and ſaid, in a firm and calm tone, "I know not, Madam, what information you have received; but this I know, and do moſt ſolemnly aſſure you, that I have no unworthy connection, no improper attachment—and," added he, animated by reflecting that his love for the innocent, amiable Monimia was neither——"and when you diſcover that I deceive you, I am content to relinquiſh your favour for ever."

"Indeed you will loſe it," anſwered Mrs. Rayland, a little relaxing of her ſeverity;—"and that I may ſtill have the pleaſure of ſuppoſing you worthy my good opinion,

opinion, and that well diſpoſed young man which I have always wiſhed to find you, your leaving this place awhile may not be amiſs. I know how to make ſome allowance for the arts of wicked girls; but I ſhall take care that no ſuch perſon diſgraces my family for the future. In regard to you, couſin, I hope you are above any ſuch unworthy thoughts. It muſt be my buſineſs to give proper directions for the reſt, and for the due regulation of my family. You will prepare, couſin, for your commiſſion, which the worthy General tells me he expects every day: he aſſures me it is worth upwards of four hundred pounds. Your father is very happy in having met with a real friend."—Orlando, thunderſtruck by a ſpeech which he believed related to Monimia, ſtood like a ſtatue. It was fortunate for him that Mrs. Rayland, after the words wicked girls, continued to ſpeak; for, had ſhe not done ſo, Orlando would infallibly have betrayed himſelf by entering into a warm defence of Monimia;

he would indeed have confeſſed, without reſerve, their long attachment, and frequent interviews: but the reſt of her ſpeech, and the entrance of Mrs. Lennard, for whom ſhe rang juſt as ſhe concluded it, gave him time to recollect himſelf: yet when Mrs. Rayland, in her uſual way, diſmiſſed him, he doubted whether his honour and his love did not call upon him to come to an immediate explanation. The conſideration and kindneſs which Mrs. Rayland expreſſed for him, ſo unlike the uſual prudiſh aſperity of her diſpoſition, were offenſive and hateful to him, when he believed ſhe acquitted him at the expence of Monimia. He haſtened however to his own apartment, becauſe it was neceſſary to ſee what was become of his brother. It was ſome alleviation to his confuſion and diſtreſs to find Philip was gone; and he ſat down, endeavouring to collect his thoughts, and to determine on what was to be done.

That Monimia was on his account to be diſmiſſed from the houſe of Mrs. Rayland, and

and the protection of her only relation, the circumſtances of the preceding night, added to what he had juſt heard, left him but little reaſon to doubt. What then was to become of her? and how could he make her any reparation for the injury he had done her, but by inſtantly declaring the truth, and relinquiſhing all proſpect of future proſperity, from which ſhe muſt be excluded?—Deſperate as he felt this ſtep to be, he was in a ſtate of mind that urged him to decide on any thing that might bring their fate to a criſis: and, believing himſelf finally determined, he ſtarted up from this ſhort counſel with himſelf, and was going haſtily to the apartment of Mrs. Rayland, when at the door he was ſtopped by Betty, who, with her hat on, and a ſmall bundle in her hand, dropped him a curtſey, and ſaid, with an arch ſmile, "I'm come to take my leave of you, 'Squire, and to wiſh you well."

"Whither are you going then, Betty?" ſaid Orlando.

"Lord, Sir," cried the girl, "you're ſuch another hard-hearted gentleman!—What! I warrant you don't know that Madam have ſent me down my wages, with orders to go out of her houſe directly, and all upon your account."

"Upon my account!"—"Pattenſon it ſeems have been telling more falſe lies to Madam. He won't believe, ever ſince that night that ſomebody was ſeen in your room—I don't know who, not I—that you and I be too great: Madam Lennard would never hear on't till to-day; but now they've found out, by laying their old noddles together, that I was out of the houſe laſt night, and they ſays 'twas along a you. Knowing my own innocence, I bears it all; for I be clear of the charge, as you know very well: I wiſh every body could ſay as much; but I know what I know."

Orlando now inſtantly comprehended that it was of Betty Mrs. Rayland had ſpoken, and not of the innocent Monimia, whom his own raſh impatience was again

on

on the point of betraying. Senſible of his good fortune in having been thus prevented, he was ſtill confuſed and agitated. "Whatever you know, Betty," ſaid he, "of me, I am at leaſt very ſorry you have, by any miſtake relative to me, loſt your place, and Mrs. Lennard's favour."

"As to *her* favour," anſwered the girl pertly, "I values it no more than that; and ſhe had better keep her tongue within her teeth about me, I can tell her that; and as for places, there's more in the world. One ſhould have a fine time on't, indeed, to paſs all one's life in this here old dungeon, among rats, and ghoſts, and old women. However, young 'Squire, I adviſes you, as a friend, to take more care for the future: ſome people are very ſly; but for my part I ſcorn to betray 'um—but mayhap the next houſemaid mid'nt be ſo willing as I have been to bear the blame for things ſhe's as innocent of as the child unborn."

"I cannot tell to what you allude," replied Orlando in a hurried voice; "but

this I know, that if I have done you any injury, I am very ſorry for it, and willing to make you any reparation in my power." He then took a guinea from his pocket—"Accept of this," cried he, "and be aſſured I ſhall on any future occaſion be happy to ſerve you."—The girl took the guinea, but without expreſſing any gratitude either for that, or his apparent wiſhes to make her what amends he could for the loſs of her place:—ſhe flippantly told him, ſhe hoped, for all Madam's injuſtice, and the malice of her enemies, ſhe had *frinds* who would not let her be beholden to nobody—She then left the houſe.

Orlando, thus relieved from the moſt acute uneaſineſs he had ever ſuffered, returned to his room. He moſt ardently wiſhed to communicate to Monimia the joy he felt in finding that the ſuſpicions excited by ſo many awkward circumſtances, had by ſome means or other fallen upon this ſervant; and apparently without doing her any injury, which would have conſiderably

derably leſſened his ſatisfaction. Far from regretting her diſmiſſion, ſhe ſeemed pleaſed with having had an opportunity given her to be diſmiſſed; and Orlando, who had long known her to be a very improper aſſociate for Monimia, found many reaſons to be glad of her departure. That ſhe knew, or very ſtrongly ſuſpected their meetings, ſeemed very evident; ſhe was much leſs dangerous any where than within the houſe—and as to what ſhe might ſay without, which might be prejudicial to the character of Monimia, he determined to prevent the ill effects of that where it might be moſt prejudicial, by confeſſing, before he left the country, the very extent of his fault to his father, who already ſuſpected ſo much of the truth.

However earneſtly he wiſhed to ſpeak to Monimia, and however uneaſy the idea of her ſuſpenſe and dejection made him, he could find no opportunity of ſpeaking to her during the morning, without hazard, which he had too recently ſuffered for, ſo immediately

immediately to incur again. Though Mrs. Lennard had artfully made Betty the victim, there was ſtill reaſon to believe ſhe was not without ſuſpicions; and to irritate or increaſe them now, would be to preclude himſelf from the laſt pleaſure he was likely to taſte during the reſt of his ſhort reſidence at the Hall—the pleaſure of ſoothing his beloved Monimia, and, at the few interviews which they might yet obtain, reconciling her ſoft heart to the neceſſity of that ſeparation that was ſo ſoon to happen.

He was ſummoned to dinner with Mrs. Rayland, who ſeemed pleaſed to find he was ſtill at the Hall. Never did the old Lady appear in ſuch good humour with him, or ſo relaxed from the ſtarch prudery of her uſual character.—She gave way to her love of telling anecdotes and ſtories of her own family; and, pleaſed with the attention Orlando gave to her narratives, ſhe hinted to him, though ſtill with great ambiguity, that it would be his own fault if he was not

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one day or other the repreſentative of a family ſo illuſtrious. She then ſpoke of his elder brother with anger and contempt, which Orlando generouſly tried to ſoften; of his mother with her uſual coldneſs and diſlike; and of his ſiſters as good, pretty-behaved girls—"that is, I mean, the two youngeſt. As to Miſs Belle—ſhe's a London lady already: I proteſt it hurts me to ſee young women ſo bold—but ſhe has been cried up for a beauty. 'Tis vanity ruins all girls—no good is ever to be expected from them when once they get conceited notions into their heads of being handſome."

Orlando undertook the defence of his ſiſter with more zeal than prudence; but Mrs. Rayland, though not to be convinced that Iſabella was not a vain coquet, which indeed her unguarded gaiety gave the old Lady very good reaſon to believe, was however in a humour to be pleaſed with all Orlando ſaid. Her attachment to him had been long inſenſibly increaſing; and though,

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like another Elizabeth, ſhe could not bear openly to acknowledge her ſucceſſor, ſhe was as little proof as the royal ancient virgin, againſt the attractions of an amiable and handſome young man, whom ſhe loved to conſider as the child of her bounty, and the creature of her ſmiles. Though determined to keep him dependent during her life, and even to ſend him out a ſoldier of fortune, ſhe really meant to give him, at her death, the whole of her landed property; and the machinations of Pattenſon, whoſe jealouſy and avarice alike excited his hatred to Orlando, had hitherto had an effect ſo different from what he expected, that he found his politics entirely baffled, and more likely to loſe, by farther attempts, his Lady's regard, than to ſhake that ſhe entertained for the young favourite.

A few years before, the very ſuſpicion of an intrigue would have ſhut for ever the doors of Rayland Hall againſt the ſuppoſed delinquent; but now the attempts to impute ſuch to Orlando had ended in nothing but

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the diſmiſſing a ſervant—a circumſtance proving at once, that though ſome credit was given to the accuſation, no reſentment towards him was entertained.

Mrs. Lennard, who had more ſenſe and more art than Pattenſon, and who had opportunities more cloſely to obſerve her Lady, had long ſeen the progreſs of her affection for Orlando, and long ceaſed to counteract it.—She was not weak enough to imagine, as Pattenſon did, that ſuch great property as Mrs. Rayland poſſeſſed would be divided among her ſervants—but ſhe knew that ſhe ſhould herſelf poſſeſs a very conſiderable legacy; and ſhe thought it better that Orlando ſhould poſſeſs the bulk of the fortune, than either his father, who had always conſidered the old ſervants about her as his enemies, or any public charity—to ſome of which Mrs. Rayland had, in former fits of ill humour, expreſſed an intention to leave the Rayland eſtate.

Mrs. Rayland had, in common with many old people, a ſtrange averſion to ſpeaking;

ſpeaking of her will, or of what was to happen after her death; and, far advanced as ſhe was in life, ſhe ſpoke of future years as if ſhe believed herſelf immortal. Mrs. Lennard had, however, once ſeen part of a will—with which, in reſpect to herſelf, ſhe had great reaſon to be ſatisfied. She knew that Mrs. Rayland had lately made another, to which ſhe was not a witneſs;—for ſuch was the peculiarity of her Lady in this reſpect, that ſhe had ſent for a lawyer and witneſſes from London, that none of the neighbouring attorneys, or even her confidential ſervants, might know its contents. Mrs. Lennard did not doubt but that Orlando was in this made the heir of almoſt all the landed property; but ſhe had no reaſon, from Mrs. Rayland's behaviour to her, to apprehend that this new will was at all prejudicial to herſelf.

Still, however, it was not her intereſt to encourage the affection which many circumſtances gave her reaſon to believe Orlando entertained for her niece. She knew that,

that, if the raſhneſs of youth and paſſion ſhould urge them to marry, it would not only ruin Orlando, who would then be a beggar; but that ſhe ſhould herſelf be accuſed of having promoted this fatal indiſcretion, and loſe her own advantages without obtaining any for her niece, whom ſhe by no means wiſhed to ſee independent of her, even if independence could thus have been obtained; and whom ſhe treated with redoubled rigour, when ſhe found reaſon to believe that Orlando felt for her that attachment which ſhe had from their childhood foreſeen and attempted to prevent.

The more Orlando gained on the favour of Mrs. Rayland, the more apprehenſive Mrs. Lennard became of his affection for Monimia: ſhe had however perſuaded herſelf, that, with the precautions ſhe took, their clandeſtinely meeting or carrying on any correſpondence was impracticable; and, ſatisfied that Monimia was confined to her room, her vigilance had

now

now and then ſlumbered. But it awakened by the late reports that obtained in the houſe and about the country; reports which originated in the goſſip of Orlando's nocturnal viſitor; of his being miſſing at unuſual hours, and from Betty's hints. When, therefore, Pattenſon's jealouſy was ſo far rouſed as to urge him to ſpeak to his Lady of a ſuppoſed intimacy between Orlando and this his faithleſs favourite, Mrs. Lennard let it make its impreſſion; and Betty's pertneſs, who had before agreed with Philip Somerive to take the firſt opportunity of going off to him, gave her a pretence immediately to diſcharge her. Mrs. Rayland, content to part with her favourite Orlando, becauſe ſhe thought it for his advantage to ſee ſomething of the world in an honourable profeſſion—and becauſe ſhe believed, if youth and idleneſs had concurred with the art of the girl with whom he was accuſed, to lead him into any improper connection, this was the beſt way to break it—determined on his departure,

ture with ſatisfaction, ſince the General aſſured her there was at preſent no probability of his leaving England.

Mrs. Lennard, who thought herſelf fortunate in having all the ſuſpicions fall on Betty, kept as a profound ſecret thoſe ſhe entertained herſelf relative to Monimia, whom ſhe reſolved narrowly to watch till Orlando was gone. And Pattenſon, glad that the young minion was to go, as he termed it, for a ſoldier, reconciled himſelf by that reflection to the failure of his original plan, which had been totally to ruin him with Mrs. Rayland. As to the loſs of his fair one, he knew ſhe would not remove far; and that reſentment for his accuſations would not make her long relentleſs, while he had preſents and money to offer her.

Such were, at this juncture, the politics of Rayland Hall.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

THE houſe of Weſt Wolverton too had its politicians; but none of them were ſo content with their paſt operations, or future proſpects, as the venerable group laſt deſcribed.

Iſabella, mild and coquettiſh as ſhe was, could no longer affect to miſunderſtand the language with which General Tracy ventured to addreſs her. For ſome time, however, ſhe affected to laugh it off; but at length reſolved, by the counſel of Selina, to ſpeak to her mother, and entreat that, if the General remained any longer their gueſt, ſhe might not be ſo often left to hear profeſſions ſo inſulting, which the preſence of her ſiſters did not always reſtrain. Mrs. Somerive, whoſe heart was half broken by

the behaviour of Philip, and who ſaw, with inexpreſſible anguiſh, the ravage which the uneaſineſs ariſing from that ſource was hourly making on the conſtitution of her huſband, had been fondly flattering herſelf, during the firſt weeks of the General's viſit, that in him Mr. Somerive had found a ſincere friend, and their children a powerful protector. The ſolicitude he expreſſed for Orlando, and the conſideration with which he treated Philip, made her ſanguinely believe that he would provide for one, and poſſibly reclaim the other. The ſums which the latter had won from him at play—Mrs. Somerive, who knew nothing of their nightly gambling, ſuppoſed the General had lent him; when her heart, overflowing with gratitude towards this generous friend, was ſuddenly ſtruck with the intelligence Iſabella gave her.

She at firſt fancied the vanity of Iſabella might have given meaning to his expreſſions which they were never meant to convey; but, upon queſtioning her and Selina repeatedly,

repeatedly, and from the obſervations ſhe made the two following days, ſhe was convinced that their repreſentations of his behaviour were juſt. This cruel certainty ſhe determined however to conceal from her huſband, and to guard, by her own prudent watchfulneſs, againſt the artifices of the General, without bringing on a rupture between him and Somerive, that might be attended with conſequences ſhe ſickened to think of.

The General, however, who paid her the moſt aſſiduous court, was ſoon ſenſible of a change in her manners; for ſhe was incapable of the diſſimulation which people of the world ſo ſucceſsfully practiſe. From hence, and from the behaviour of Iſabella, the General found that a longer ſtay would betray his inſidious deſigns without contributing at all to their ſucceſs, and he prepared to go; yet could not bear to relinquiſh for ever his hopes of gaining Iſabella, with whom he was more in love than ever. He lingered, therefore, notwithſtanding all

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the diſcouragement he received; and Somerive, who believed him the beſt and moſt ſincere friend that ever man had, communicated to him all his affairs, and all his anxiety—by which the General perceived plainly, he was in ſuch a ſtate of mind as muſt haſten him to the grave; and he had learned that, impreſſed with ideas of his (the General's) friendſhip for all his family, he had made him executor, and truſted the welfare of his wife and daughters entirely to him and to Orlando.

Though Tracy therefore could neither give up his purſuit, nor ſucceed in it at preſent, he believed that the death of the father, the indigence to which the whole family would be reduced, and the abſence of Orlando, would together make eaſy the project of obtaining Iſabella for a miſtreſs; and that patience and diſſimulation alone were neceſſary to keep up his influence in the family, till they ſhould be wholly in his power. He determined, therefore, to check himſelf; to make no more profeſ-

ſions with which Iſabella could be offended, but to expreſs his contrition that he had ſaid what ſhe conſtrued into want of reſpect; to hint remotely at honourable intentions; and thus, without engaging himſelf, or, as the faſhionable phraſe is, committing himſelf, to retain his influence over the whole family, as well as over the father; and to be aſſured that, whenever he choſe to return, he ſhould be received with pleaſure. As to any ſuſpicion that Iſabella might think him of an age ſo diſproportionate as to hear even his honourable offers with diſdain and ridicule, it never occurred to the General; and he was pretty well aſſured, from the pecuniary circumſtances of the family, that every other member of it would receive the remoteſt hint of an intended alliance with tranſport. The behaviour of Mrs. Somerive, on the evening of the tenants' ball, convinced him that Iſabella had not merely threatened when ſhe proteſted ſhe would ſpeak to her mother of his behaviour; and he found that though

Mr.

Mr. Somerive, whenever he talked of going, preſſed his ſtay, it was time to depart.

The meſſenger, who was ſent to the poſt town on the following evening for letters, brought to General Tracy a large pacquet, arrived that day by the ſtage. On opening it, it was found to contain the commiſſion of an enſign for Orlando Somerive, executed in due form, from the War Office. This he haſtened to offer, with a ſtudied ſpeech, to Mrs. Somerive; who had hardly recovered from the emotions with which the ſight of it, and his peculiar and ſtudied manner of preſenting it, occaſioned, when Orlando, anxious to know at what time his brother had got home, and how his mother and ſiſters were after the fatigue and uneaſineſs of the night before, arrived.

On his firſt entrance, he enquired eagerly after his brother.—"Your brother!" cried Mr. Somerive; "he is not at home, Orlando, nor have we ſeen him ſince laſt

night:—believing he was with you, and indeed ſuppoſing it poſſible that he was not well enough to leave your apartment, I made myſelf tolerably eaſy about him.—But when did he leave you? and where is he now?"

Orlando replied, that he had left his bed about eleven o'clock; and then, to quiet the uneaſineſs which he ſaw this unexpected abſence gave to them all, he added, "But he is gone, I dare ſay, to Mr. Stockton's, where he has talked ſome time of intending to paſs a day or two, and probably will not return home till to-morrow or next day."

"Gone to Mr. Stockton's!" exclaimed Mrs. Somerive—"What! without linen or change of clothes, though there is an houſe full of company?"

Mr. Somerive, who ſaw how much his wife was alarmed and affected, endeavoured to ſpeak lightly of the abſence of her ſon—"You know, my love," ſaid he, "that Philip does not pique himſelf on being

being a beau; and that the party at Mr. Stockton's are only men. He can probably borrow any linen he wants of his friends; and, as he means to be at home ſo ſoon, and has no ſervant with him, perhaps preferred doing ſo to the trouble of ſending home for his own." Mrs. Somerive ſighed, and caſt a deſponding look on her huſband, who added, "But, come, my dear Bella, you and I have ſomething to ſay to Orlando—we will go all together into my ſtudy for a few moments, and the girls will have tea ready againſt our return."—So ſaying, he took his wife's hand, and, Orlando following them, they left the room.

Mrs. Somerive was no ſooner releaſed from the reſtraint which the preſence of the General impoſed, than ſhe threw herſelf into a chair, and fell into an agony of tears. Her huſband gently chid her for emotion which he endeavoured to perſuade her was much beyond the occaſion; and, having ſucceeded in rendering her ſomewhat more calm, he told Orlando that his commiſſion

was arrived, and enquired whether any converſation had paſſed between him and Mrs. Rayland in conſequence of what had been held between her and General Tracy the preceding evening? Orlando related it all as nearly as he could recollect it, ſave only that ſentence which related to ſome fancied attachment; and Mr. Somerive received, with great pleaſure, what appeared to him equal to a confirmation of the moſt ſanguine hopes he had ever entertained on his ſon's behalf.—Mrs. Somerive however was leſs elated: ſhe could not comprehend how Mrs. Rayland, if ſhe had ſo much affection for Orlando, could not only bear to part with him, but promote his departure; or how, if ſhe meant to make him her heir, ſhe could determine to ſend him out in the world a ſoldier of fortune. The repreſentations of her huſband, however, and the content which Orlando expreſſed, reconciled her by degrees to what ſhe could not now recall. She gave him, but not without many tears, the commiſſion with

with which General Tracy had juſt preſented her—but as ſhe tried to give him her bleſſing with it, ſhe relapſed into convulſive ſorrow. Mr. Somerive found it would only diſtreſs her to return to the parlour; he therefore bade Orlando lead his mother to her own room, while he, returning to where his daughters were ſitting with General Tracy, bade them go to her, and ſend their brother down to the parlour.

Orlando, on his entrance, addreſſed himſelf to Tracy, whom he thanked in the moſt graceful terms. The General anſwered his compliment with politeneſs, and the three gentlemen then began to diſcourſe of the departure of Orlando for that party of his regiment that were in England, which Tracy told him could not properly be deferred longer than till the following week. He adviſed therefore that Orlando ſhould ſet out for London on the following Monday—"when," ſaid he, "as I ſhall go thither myſelf, I can have the pleaſure of giving you a place in my poſt-chaiſe."

Mr. Somerive, while he expreſſed regret that the General was to leave him ſo ſoon (though his ſtay had been prolonged to almoſt ſix weeks), yet embraced this offer with avidity. He foreſaw, that in the equipment of Orlando, of which Mrs. Rayland was, he underſtood, to defray the expence, the directions of ſuch a friend could not fail of being extremely uſeful, and that his inſtructions might in a thouſand more material inſtances be of advantage to him.—It was therefore ſettled among them, that, on the evening of the following Sunday, Orlando ſhould take leave of his ancient benefactreſs, and repair to his father's houſe, to be ready to attend General Tracy to town the next morning.

Orlando was now impatient to return to the Hall—He hoped to have a few moments converſation with Monimia that evening; alas! only one more was to intervene before his departure: and the painful taſk of reconciling her to his going ſo ſoon, and of taking a long—long leave, ſeemed to require

require an age!—His reſtleſſneſs became ſo evident that his father noticed it—"You will ſtay here to-night, Orlando?" ſaid he. "No, Sir," anſwered his ſon; "I wiſh with your leave to return to the Hall.—Mrs. Rayland often aſks for me at breakfaſt, and you will allow that juſt at this period I ſhould not ſeem in the ſlighteſt degree to neglect her."—"You are right in returning," ſaid Mr. Somerive, fixing his eyes ſteadily on thoſe of his ſon, "if that is your *only* motive."—Orlando, not able to bear the penetrating looks of his father, turned away, and ſaid haſtily—"Beſides, Sir, I wiſh to enquire after my brother—for, however I affected before my mother to believe he was at Stockton's, I aſſure you I do not know he is there, nor have I any gueſs about him but what makes me uneaſy.—"Go, then," replied his father with a deep ſigh—"but remember, Orlando, that from *you* I expect ſincerity."—"And you ſhall not be diſappointed, Sir," anſwered Orlando warmly; "before I take

my leave of you, and aſk your laſt bleſſing, my heart ſhall be laid open to you, which I would rather pierce with my own hand than ſuffer it to harbour ingratitude or diſſimulation towards ſo good a father."—Tears were in the eyes of the father and the ſon.—"Orlando!" ſaid Somerive in a faltering voice, "go to your mother before you leave the houſe, and give her all the comfort you can—the abſence of your brother overwhelms her with fear and diſtreſs; and before we ſee you to-morrow, my ſon——for I ſuppoſe we ſhall ſee you....."

"Certainly, Sir! at any time you name."

"Make that convenient to yourſelf, Orlando; only, before we do ſee you, endeavour to find your brother, and perſuade him to return, or at leaſt bring us ſome news of him."

Orlando promiſed he would; and then went to his mother, who had by this time reaſoned herſelf into a more calm ſtate of mind. Having taken leave of her and his

ſiſters for the night, he ſet out on foot to return to the Hall.

The night was overcaſt and gloomy; chill and hollow the wind whiſtled among the leafleſs trees, or groaned amid the thick firs in the dark and ſilent wood;—the water-falls murmured hollow in the blaſt, and only the owl's cry broke thoſe dull and melancholy ſounds, which ſeemed to ſay—"Orlando, you will reviſit theſe ſcenes no more!" He endeavoured to reaſon himſelf out of theſe comfortleſs preſages. He tried to figure to himſelf the happier days, that never ſeemed ſo likely as now to be his, and at no very remote period. Though Mrs. Rayland was, from peculiarity of temper, averſe to naming her ſucceſſor, ſhe was not at all likely to hold out hopes ſhe never meant to realize, and certainly ſhe never gave any ſo ſtrong as what her converſation of that morning had offered. He endeavoured therefore to perſuade himſelf, that the time was not very far diſtant when, if he was not actually the

poſſeſſor of Rayland Hall, he ſhould at leaſt have ſuch a competency as ſhould enable him to ſettle in this his native country with his beloved Monimia. He tried to animate his drooping ſpirits with the idea that, in the profeſſion into which he was now entering, he might find the means of accelerating this happy period. But then the frightful interval that muſt intervene occurred to him, with all the poſſibilities that might happen in it; and the deſtitute ſtate of Monimia, the ill health of his father (which, though he did not complain, was viſible to every body), the unhappy miſconduct of his brother, threatening the ruin and diſperſion of his family, and the poſſibility that Mrs. Rayland might diſappoint the expectations ſhe had raiſed, all combined to ſink and depreſs him, and again to lend to the well-known paths he was traverſing, horrors not their own, while every object repeated—"Orlando will reviſit theſe ſcenes no more!"

By the time he reached that part of the park

park from whence the houſe was viſible at a diſtance, it was quite dark, and, had he not almoſt inſtinctively known his way, he could not have diſcerned it—for no light glimmered from the Gothic windows of the Hall, not even in that part of the houſe inhabited by the ſervants; and Orlando imagined that moſt of them, fatigued the night before, were gone earlier than uſual to bed. He fixed his eyes earneſtly on Monimia's turret:—all was dark; and he doubted whether her aunt had not removed her, in conſequence of the ſuſpicions that originated in the circumſtances of the preceding evening. This apprehenſion made his ſpirits ſink ſtill more heavily; and when he was within an hundred yards of the houſe, he ſtopped, and gazed mournfully on the place, which perhaps no longer contained the object of his affection.

There is hardly a ſenſation more painful than the blank that ſtrikes on the heart, when, inſtead of the light we expect ſtreaming from ſome beloved ſpot where our affections

affections are fondly fixed, all is ſilent and dark.—Ah! how often in life we feel this yet ſtronger, when the friend on whom we rely becomes ſuddenly cold and repulſive! Orlando, who was paſſionately fond of poetry, recollected the ſimply deſcriptive ſtanza in the ballad of Hardyknute:

"Theirs nae licht in my lady's bowir,
"Theirs nae licht in the hall;
"Nae blink ſhynes round my fairly fair—"

And, like the diſmayed hero of the ſong,

"Black feir he felt, but what to fear
"He wiſt not zit with dreid."

Quiet as every thing appeared round the houſe, he knew it was earlier than the hour when Mrs. Lennard uſually locked the door of Monimia's apartment for the night; it *was* poſſible that ſhe might have detained her niece in her own room longer than was her general cuſtom.

In hopes that he might ſee the light at length glimmer through the caſement, which would aſſure him Monimia was there, he determined to watch for it a little longer, where he might not be himſelf obſerved.

It

It was indeed ſo very dark that he was ſure it was impoſſible for any one to diſcern him from the houſe, or at leaſt to diſtinguiſh his figure from that of the deer who were feeding around him. He ſat down therefore on the turf; but the dreary moments paſſed, and ſtill no light appeared—though Orlando was ſure that if a light was in the room he muſt ſee it, becauſe of the want of ſhutters towards the upper part of this long window. A thouſand conjectures diſturbed him, and grew, as time wore away, more and more painful. Perhaps Monimia was indiſpoſed, and had gone early to bed; perhaps the alarms ſhe had ſuffered the preceding evening, and uneaſineſs at his not having ſeen her, might have overcome her tender ſpirits, and, together with the harſh reproaches of her aunt, have rendered her really ill. His warm and rapid imagination now repreſented her ſinking under anguiſh of mind which ſhe dared not communicate—and tenderly reproaching him for being the cauſe of all her ſufferings. It

was

was he who had diſturbed the innocent ſerenity of her boſom—and perſuaded her to grant him interviews, with which ſhe continually reproached herſelf. Or, if this was not the caſe, if her lovely frame was not overwhelmed by ſickneſs ariſing from ſorrow, perhaps ſhe was more ſtrictly confined in ſome part of the houſe where it would be impoſſible for him to ſee her; from whence it would be equally impoſſible for her to eſcape to him, to indulge him in the laſt ſad pleaſure of a parting interview. This laſt conjecture appeared highly probable, from what Mrs. Lennard had ſaid to him in the morning; and he found it too intolerable, even while it was but conjecture, to be ſupported with patience. The great clock now ſtruck eleven: every vibration ſeemed to fall on his heart.—He traverſed yet a little longer the turf immediately under the windows of the turret; and at length ſaw a light from the ſervants' hall, whither he went, hoping, yet fearing, to gain ſome intelligence which he dreaded to aſk.

He

He entered, however; but found only Pattenſon there, who was putting out the fire. It was in vain Orlando addreſſed him with great civility. The ſulky old butler, who imputed to him the alacrity with which his favourite nymph had left the houſe, looked at him with a countenance cloudy and indignant, and deigned not even to give him the candle he aſked for.—"There are candles, if you want them!" was all he could obtain from him. He enquired if Mrs. Rayland was gone to her room? if he could ſpeak to Mrs. Lennard? To which Pattenſon, turning ſullenly away, replied, "The women's ſide of the houſe has been ſhut up theſe two hours—you'll hardly get any admittance to make your ſlummering ſpeeches to any on 'em to-night."—Orlando, already irritated by vexation, was ſo much provoked at this inſolence, that he was tempted to knock down the conſequential Mr. Pattenſon; but he fortunately recollected that he was an old man, and a ſervant, and that it was unworthy of him to ſtrike

ſuch

ſuch a perſon, whatever might be the provocation. He could not however help expreſſing his anger for this inſult, in terms ſtronger than he uſually allowed himſelf; and then, half frantic, went to his own room, merely becauſe he knew not what to do to obtain ſome intelligence of Monimia.

After a moment's conſideration, he went through the chapel, and to the lower room of the turret. If Mrs. Lennard had diſcovered the door of communication, he thought he ſhould perceive it by ſome means or other—but all below was as he left it:—he then mounted the ſtairs, and liſtened at the door behind Monimia's bed, but all was profoundly ſilent. He then ventured to tap ſoftly at the door, their uſual ſignal, which Monimia never failed, when ſhe was alone, to anſwer inſtantly; but now no anſwer was returned. He ſpoke—but no ſoft voice, in tremulous whiſpers, replied. Again he rapped, and ſpoke louder; but ſtill all was dead ſilence around him.

him.—Yet he waited a moment or two—loſt in diſtracting conjectures—Monimia was certainly not in her room—what then was become of her, or whither was ſhe gone? He felt as if he ſhould never ſee her more, though it was impoſſible to ſuppoſe ſhe was removed from the houſe. At length he returned to his own apartment again, more wretched than he left it;—and not ſeeing any probability of diſcovering that night what could thus have robbed him of the ſight of Monimia, he went to his bed—but not to ſleep, though he had ſuffered ſo many hours of mental and bodily fatigue. He watched the earlieſt dawn of light; and as ſoon as he could diſcern the objects about the park, he dreſſed himſelf and went out—walking ſlowly round the houſe, and looking up at all the windows, in hopes that if Monimia was as reſtleſs as he was, ſhe might appear at that of the room ſhe was confined in, in the expectation of ſeeing him. But he made his melancholy tour repeatedly in vain. He then returned

returned to his own room, furniſhed himſelf with materials for ſhooting, and then went into the kitchen under pretence of drying ſome powder; that, while he watched it carefully himſelf, he might have pretence for ſtaying to talk a little with the cook. This woman, whoſe admiration of Orlando's beauty had made her much his friend, was willing enough to goſſip with him, and talked much of Betty's being ſo ſuddenly diſcharged, declaimed againſt her, and hinted that it was pity ſuch a young 'ſquire ſhould undervalue himſelf ſo as to take a liking to ſuch a tawdry trollop.—Orlando, who cared very little what was thought of him in regard to Betty, rather humoured than denied the oblique charge; but endeavoured to lead the converſation towards Mrs. Lennard, whom ſhe called a covetous croſs old frump; "and as for that," added the woman, "ſhe uſes that ſweet child, her niece as they call her, no better than a dog."

"Why,

"Why, how does ſhe uſe her?" cried Orlando faltering and in a hurried voice: "What! has ſhe lately done any thing?"

"Not as I knows on; but I kno wsſhe is always rating her, ſo as the poor young thing have no peace of her life—and if ſhe offer for to come to ſpeak to any of us ſarvants, there's a rare to-do!—Fine airs truly for mother Lennard to give herſelf—as if her niece was a bit better than we be!—If ſhe's ſo proud that ſhe won't let the girl ſpeak to no ſarvants, I think ſhe mid as well not make her work like one—which I'm ſure ſhe does, and ſhuts her up like as a felon in a jail."

"Where," ſaid Orlando, "does ſhe ſhut her up?"

"Why, in her own room, don't ſhe? From morning to night, and from one year's end to another, ſhe's lock'd up in that there place, that's juſt for all the world like a belfry."

"And is ſhe there now?" cried Orlando eagerly.

"Yes,"

"Yes," replied the cook, "I ſuppoſe ſo—I think, 'ſquire, inſtead of running after ſuch a drab as Bet, you'd better help Miſs out of her cage."

This was ſaid merely at random; but Orlando's confuſion was evident. He found that whatever removal Mrs. Lennard had projected and executed for her niece, ſhe had not communicated her intentions, or the motives of them, to this ſervant, and probably not to any of the others.—His diſtracting ſuſpenſe was now almoſt inſupportable. He had promiſed his father to enquire after Philip; he was under the neceſſity of ſeeing Mrs. Rayland; and muſt paſs ſome part of the day with his family. Thus circumſtanced, it was impoſſible, unleſs he gained ſome immediate intelligence of Monimia, that he could acquaint her with the deciſion made in the courſe of the preceding day in regard to his departure for London—impoſſible to contrive a meeting, on which his hopes had ſo long dwelt, when he might reconcile

reconcile her to his going, and offer her thoſe vows of everlaſting attachment which he meant moſt religiouſly to keep. It now occurred to him, that he would take his gun, and fire it on that ſide of the houſe that was next Mrs. Lennard's apartment, in hopes that Monimia might come to the window for the chance of ſeeing if it was he who fired.—Retiring therefore haſtily from the kitchen, without ſeeming to attend to the raillery of the ſervant with whom he had been talking, he ſaid there was a hawk about the park, which he had ſeen early that morning ſtrike a young hare; and that he would endeavour to ſhoot it. He went then almoſt under the windows of Mrs. Lennard's room, and fired repeatedly, without obtaining what he wiſhed for. At length he ſaw through the caſement the figure of Monimia. He claſped his hands together, as if to entreat her ſtay, and to expreſs the anguiſh he laboured under. She looked fearfully behind her, as if dreading her aunt—and then beckoned

to

to him to approach. He flew under the window—ſhe opened the caſement, and ſaid, while fear made her voice almoſt inarticulate, "My aunt ſuſpects us, and has removed me into her cloſet—Come after it is dark under the window, and I will tell you farther." "Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Orlando, "I go from hence on Monday, and we ſhall meet then no more."

"I dare not ſtay," cried the trembling Monimia—"Pray, come as ſoon as it is dark!"

"To what purpoſe," exclaimed Orlando, "if I am only to ſee you thus? By Heaven I ſhall loſe my ſenſes!"

"Oh! if you knew," ſaid Monimia, "what I have ſuffered, you would not terrify me now—For mercy's ſake, go!" She then ſhut the window; and Orlando, not caring and hardly knowing what he did, went again round the houſe—half tempted to turn the mouth of his gun againſt himſelf. The wildneſs and diſtraction

traction of his countenance ſtruck one of the under keepers, who, believing he was really in purſuit of ſome bird of prey, came to offer his aſſiſtance. The impatience however of Orlando's anſwers, ſo unlike his general obliging manners, convinced the fellow that the report he had heard in the family was true, and that Orlando was in deſpair, becauſe handſome Betty, as ſhe was called among the ſervants, had left the family on his account. The young man loved Orlando, as did indeed every creature who approached him; and he now endeavoured to conſole him—"If I was you, Sir," ſaid he, as he walked after him, "I would not take this to heart ſo much." "What!" cried Orlando peeviſhly, "take what to heart?"—"Why, about this young woman," anſwered the keeper: "to be ſure you be parted, but perhaps all's for the beſt; who knows?"

Orlando, whoſe head and heart were full of Monimia, imagined that it was of her the

man ſpoke; and turning haſtily to him, he ſaid in an eager, yet angry way—

"What is it you mean, Jacob, and what is for the beſt?"

"Nay, Sir," anſwered Jacob, "I only ſay, that worſe might have come of it; for to my knowledge there have been a deal ſaid, and the talk of the country ſure enough it have been. There was t'other night at the Three Horſe Shoes—there was three or four of us of the Hall, and John Dutton and Richard Williams at Mill, and Stokes and Smith, and ſome more—and ſo they were ſpeaking of this here young body; and Stokes, who is a free ſpoken man, he ſaid, ſays he"—"What ſcoundrel," exclaimed Orlando, enraged and thrown wholly off his guard, "what infamous lying ſcoundrel ſhall dare to traduce her?—I will tear the ſoul out of any raſcal, who ſhall breathe even a ſuſpicion againſt Monimia."

"Monimia, Sir!" cried the man, who

was thunderſtruck by the violence of Orlando, "Lord, I was ſpeaking of Betty—ſhe as went away this morning becauſe of your keeping company with her—I'm ſure, Sir, I never thought no harm of Miſs Monimmy, nor ſcarce ever ſee her twice in my life."

Orlando now repented him of his raſhneſs.—"Well, well," ſaid he—"I believe you, Jacob—I'm ſure you would not ſay or think any harm of an innocent young lady, eſpecially, Jacob, if you thought it would diſpleaſe me, and do me a great deal of harm."—Jacob now moſt earneſtly proteſted not only his unwillingneſs to offend, but his deſire to oblige his honour.—— Orlando, whoſe ſpirits were yet in ſuch a tumult, that he could not arrange the ideas that crowded on his mind, now bade Jacob follow him into his ſtudy. Unwilling as he had always been to put Monimia into the power of ſervants, he knew that ſomething deciſive muſt be hazarded, or that he muſt reſign all hopes of ſeeing her be-

fore he went: he was the leſs ſcrupulous, as he was ſo ſoon to go, and he hoped he could make it this young man's intereſt to be faithful to him.—It occurred to him, that even when he was gone, ſome perſon muſt be in his confidence, who would receive, and deliver to Monimia, the letters which he knew he dared not direct to her at the Hall. This miſtake therefore, which had for a moment vexed and confuſed him, he now thought a fortunate circumſtance, and, without farther reflection, diſcloſed to this young man his long affection for Monimia; the difficulties he was in at the preſent moment about ſeeing her; and his wiſh to find ſome means of correſponding with her hereafter. Jacob entered into his ſituation with an appearance of intelligence and intereſt with which Orlando was well ſatisfied. They agreed upon a plan for the evening—by which Orlando hoped to procure an interview with Monimia, inſtead of merely ſeeing her at the window; and elated with this hope, he forgot the hazard

hazard and impropriety of the means he had uſed to obtain it.

Having however talked over and ſettled every thing with his new confident, he went to pay his compliments to Mrs. Rayland, to whom he reported the arrival of his commiſſion, and whom he found in the ſame diſpoſition as when he laſt ſaw her—Then having obtained her leave to dine at his father's, he ſet out in purſuit of his brother, in hopes of carrying ſome intelligence to his family that might diſſipate their uneaſineſs, of which his own did not render him unmindful. He rode therefore to Mr. Stockton's, where he learned from the ſervants, that Mr. Philip Somerive had been there about one o'clock; that he had borrowed linen of their maſter, with whom he ſtaid till after a late dinner, and then had ſet out in a poſt-chaiſe, as he ſaid, for London. This was information but little likely to quiet the uneaſineſs of his father and his family—with a heavy heart, therefore, Orlando proceeded to give

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it. Mr. Somerive received it with a deep ſigh, but without any comment; his wife with tears; while the General, from whom they concealed nothing, endeavoured to conſole them by making light of it. "I am perſuaded," ſaid he, "my good friends, that your extreme ſolicitude and anxiety for your children often carry you beyond the line that diſpaſſionate reaſon would mark for your conduct towards them."—Then addreſſing himſelf in his inſinuating way to Mrs. Somerive, he added—"For example, now, my dear good friend—you no ſooner hear that it is right for you to part with your younger ſon for the army, than you imagine that he will be killed. No ſooner is your elder miſſing upon one of thoſe little excurſions, which a young man of high ſpirit, without any preſent employment, very naturally indulges himſelf in, than you figure to yourſelf I know not what evil conſequence. Believe me, Orlando will not ſleep in the bed of honour, nor our more eccentric Philip be devour-

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ed by the Philiſtines. Make yourſelves eaſy, therefore, I beg of you. Your ſon is gone to London for four or five days perhaps—what then?—Here is your other ſon going with me—and we will make it our buſineſs to ſee Philip, if you will but make yourſelves eaſy—and I dare ſay you will have him with you again, before you eat your Chriſtmas dinner, ſafe and ſound."

Mr. Somerive, who ſaw from ſad experience the departure of Philip in a very different light, would not however dwell longer on a ſubject ſo affecting and ſo uſeleſs. It was of no avail to diſcuſs now the reaſons he had to dread the conduct of his eldeſt ſon, in this unexpected abſence; nor did he wonder, for he had often ſeen it in others, at the compoſure with which General Tracy argued againſt the indulgence of uneaſineſs, which he himſelf could never feel; and he repeated to himſelf, as he longed to ſay to his friend, that it is eaſy to recommend patience with an untouched or inſenſible heart; patience in evils,

evils, that either can never reach the preacher, or which he is incapable of feeling.—Some lines of Shakeſpeare, applicable to the General's remonſtrance, and the uneaſy ſtate of his thoughts, occurred to him as he walked into the garden to conceal thoſe thoughts from his wife.

" No, no! 'tis all men's office to ſpeak patience
" To thoſe that wring under a load of ſorrow;
" But no man's virtue or ſufficiency
" To be ſo moral, when he ſhall endure
" The like himſelf. Therefore give me no comfort."

6 NO 63

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

20